THE CHILDREN'S HOUR

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The Children's Hour

More Five-Minute Sermons

By
STUART NYE HUTCHISON, D.D.
Pastor First Presbyterian Church,
Norfolk, Va.

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TO THE CHILDREN OF MY HOME
AND THE CHILDREN EVERYWHERE
WHO HAVE HELPED ME TO A CLEARER KNOWLEDGE
OF THE TRUTH
I DEDICATE THIS LITTLE VOLUME
IN LOVE AND HOPE

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I

The Children's Crusade

"And they returned again to Jerusalem with joy; for the Lord had made them to rejoice over their enemies."—2 CHRON. xx. 27.

IT was good news that came to us a while ago that the British armies had captured the city of Jerusalem. It could have been taken weeks before, but the British commander did not use his cannon for fear of destroying some of the sacred places about the wonderful old city. When the British army finally took the city that great and good man, General Allenby, left his horse outside and marched in on foot. He did not think himself worthy to ride in triumph into the city through whose streets Jesus had once walked.

It is the first time for many centuries that a Christian ruler has been in power in Jerusalem. Nearly thirteen hundred years ago the city was taken by the Arabs, and during all those years, with the exception of a little while, it has been in the possession of the Moslems. It has always seemed sad that the city where Jesus worked, and preached, and where He died on the cross, should have been

so long in the hands of people who did not love and honor Him. But at last a great Christian government controls Jerusalem.

Many brave efforts have been made in the last fifteen hundred years to take the city away from the Mohammedans. Seven or eight hundred years ago there were vast armies of men called Crusaders, who marched across Europe from England, and France, and Germany. They went to Palestine and tried to drive out the Turks and make Jerusalem a Christian city. They were very brave and more than once they took the city, but the Turks always came back, and at last they had to give it up.

One of the saddest and strangest events of all history was the Children's Crusade. About seven hundred years ago the children of Germany and France thought that they could go and rescue Jerusalem from the Turks.

They had been told that when they came to the Mediterranean Sea the waters would part, as the Red Sea did before the children of Israel, and that all they would have to do would be to walk over to Palestine on dry ground. They believed that when they arrived at Jerusalem they could march about the city seven times, as Joshua did at Jericho, and the walls would fall down flat, and the city would be taken.

The trouble was it did not turn out that way at all. There were thirty thousand of these children from France, led by a boy named Stephen, and forty thousand from Germany, led by a boy named Nicholas. They marched south and tried to cross the Alps in the middle of winter, and thousands of them perished with cold and hunger. There were thousands more who dropped along the way from fatigue and disease. Only a few ever reached the shores of the Mediterranean, and they were captured and sold into slavery. It was one of the saddest things that has ever happened.

Now, what is it about Jerusalem that makes the whole world love it? It isn't because it is the finest city in the world. There are many cities here in America that are much finer and bigger than Jerusalem. It is because Jesus died there that we love Jerusalem. We love that city because we love Him, and we love Him because He is the friend of every boy and girl.

There was a boy who had met with a bad accident and had lost his right hand. He felt so badly over it that he did not want to see anyone. His father said, "I'm going to bring the minister in to talk to you." The boy said, "I don't want to see him." But the father brought him in. When the boy looked up he saw that the minister had no right

arm. Where the arm ought to have been there was an empty sleeve. He came over to the boy and said, "I haven't any hand either. I lost mine when I was a boy and I know how it feels." It wasn't hard for the boy to get acquainted with the minister, for he "knew how it felt."

That is what makes the whole world love Jesus. He has suffered for us and He knows how to sympathize with us.

II

The Man in the Moon

"Love envieth not."—1 CORINTHIANS xiii. 4.

HAVE you ever seen the man in the moon? If you haven't, the next time the moon is full go and look at it, and you will see down in one corner of it what looks like a man's face. Those black ridges you see on the surface of the moon are really mountains, but when you look at them in a certain way they look like the face of a man.

There are many strange stories about this man in the moon. The Italians used to say that the man in the moon is Cain, who killed his brother, Abel. God punished him by making him a wanderer in the earth, without any home or friends, and when he died He made him go and live there in the moon. There are no other people in the moon, and if Cain couldn't get along with other folks he had better go and live by himself. So poor Cain has to live, they say, always by himself in the moon. But sometimes he is very lonely, and then he comes and looks out to see if he can see someone else.

I know that every time you see that man in the moon you are going to think about

poor old Cain, so I am going to tell you about him to-day.

Cain and Abel were the first little boys that ever were. Your fathers and mothers have so many people and so many things to think about that very often they do not have much time to give to you. But then there were no other people on the earth, so that Adam and Eve could spend as much time as they wanted to with their little boys.

Adam had a fine farm, and when the boys grew older he taught them to help him with the work. Cain looked after the farm and Abel took care of the sheep. Cain was a very jealous sort of a boy. Now and then we see a boy like him nowadays. If some other boy gets a better mark at school, or a bigger piece of pie at dinner, or wins a game on the playground, he is very angry and jealous. There are some children that never have any fun at all. They are so jealous that it spoils everything. That was the trouble with Cain. He thought to himself, "Father is putting all the hard work on me. I have to plow, and sow, and reap, and do all the rough labor about this farm, and all that Abel has to do is to sit on a rock under a nice shade-tree and watch a few sheep all day."

The more Cain thought about it the more angry he became. Jealousy is a very danger-

ous thing. It spoils our dispositions and makes us do mean and contemptible things.

Adam and Eve tried to teach Cain and Abel to honor the Lord. The first and best of everything that they had was to be given to Him. Abel went to the flock and picked out the finest little lamb that he had and gave that to the Lord. Cain went to his garden and took some vegetables and fruit and offered them to God. The Lord accepted Abel's gift. He wants our best. But He would not accept Cain's. He does not care for anything but the very best.

This made Cain more angry and jealous than ever. Abel was always getting the best of everything, first, from his father and mother, and now from the Lord. It made him so furious that he killed his brother.

After that, the Bible tells us, he heard a voice that said, "Where is Abel, thy brother?" He ran away from home to get away from the voice, but it followed him wherever he traveled. And so he became a wanderer in the earth.

We think that jealousy is a very small thing sometimes, and that a little will not hurt. But it always leads us to sin and trouble. So whenever you find the least sign of it in your heart, stamp it out. Remember the words of my text this morning, "Love envieth not."

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III

The Little Girl Who Made Herself Good-Looking

"'Favor is deceitful and beauty is vain, but a woman that feareth the Lord, she shall be praised.'"—PROVERBS xxxi. 30.

SOMETIME ago there were three little girls quarreling, and what do you think they were having all that trouble about? It is bad enough to quarrel about anything, but this dispute they were having was about the strangest I ever heard of. They were having a fuss about which was the ugliest. One little girl told another that she was the ugliest child she had ever seen, and the other little girl said she was not, that somebody else was the ugliest.

Almost every little girl thinks a great deal about her looks. Boys don't usually care much about how they look till they are a little older, and then they think about it, too.

There is a little Scotch fairy story, about good looks that I think we all ought to hear.

Once, long ago, there were two little princesses in Scotland. Their names were Rose and Marion. Rose was very beautiful and

Marion was very ugly. Poor Marion hated Rose because everyone praised her and loved her. She was so unhappy that she became unkind and unpleasant to everyone about her.

Not very far from the castle was a deep grotto, in which the queen of the fairies lived. Someone told Marion that Rose had fallen asleep there one day and the fairy queen had dipped her in a lovely fountain, and that was what had made her so beautiful.

Every time Marion looked into the mirror and saw how homely she was she thought about that fountain, and at last she made up her mind that she would try to be beautiful too. When no one was looking one day she went to the grotto, and lay down there on the grass and fell asleep. When she woke up she was in a beautiful hall, full of all kinds of lovely flowers, and gorgeous things. There before her on a lovely throne was the queen of the fairies. Marion said to her with trembling voice, "Will you please make me as handsome as my sister Rose?"

"I will do as you ask," said the queen, "if you will do as I ask. I want you to go home, and for one week you must not say one unkind word to your sister or anyone else. When you have done that come back and see me again."

Marion went home very happy. She did not find it easy to be kind to her sister, but she wanted to be beautiful so much that she succeeded, and at the end of the week she went back to the grotto.

She went to sleep and again she was in the magic hall before the queen. "Have you done as I told you?" said the queen.

"I have," answered Marion.

"Then follow me," said the queen, and she took Marion and showed her some of the wonders of fairyland. Then she said, "Now, you must go back, and for one month try to do kind deeds, and see how happy you can make other people."

So she went home, and for one month she did everything she could to make the world better. She was kind to Rose, and everyone saw that some great change had come over her.

At the end of that month she went again to the grotto to see the queen of the fairies. She asked Marion if she had done as she asked. She said, "Yes." "Now," she said, "you must go home and for one whole year you must think nothing but good thoughts. And you must do it, not because you want to be beautiful, but because it is right." This was the hardest thing the queen had asked. Marion tried it three times, and each time she failed, but at last she succeeded. Then

she went back to the grotto. There was the queen, and with her all the faries. "Now," said the queen, "look into that mirror." She looked and she was even more beautiful than her sister Rose. She had made herself good-looking by learning to be good, and to do good, and to think only the things that are lovely.

There are some people who think that the way to make themselves pretty is to put on fine clothes and new hats, and lots of paint and powder, but those things will not make anyone beautiful. The way to be good-looking is to take care of the heart, and the face will take care of itself.

IV

The Horse That Was Afraid of His Shadow

"Looking unto Jesus."—HEBREWS xii. 2.

THE historian, Plutarch, in his "Life of Alexander the Great," tells a very interesting story of a horse.

Philip, king of Macedon, the father of Alexander, once bought a beautiful horse. This horse's name was "Bucephalus." "Bucephalus" is a Greek name, and it means "bull-headed." They called him by this name because he was as strong and wild as a bull. The king had paid thirteen talents for him, which would be about twelve thousand dollars of our money, so you see he was a very valuable horse. The great trouble was that no man could be found who could tame him. He was so wild and vicious that they could not get on his back.

At last King Philip became displeased and told the servants to take the horse away. Alexander, the king's son, heard what his father said, and it made him very sorry to think that they should lose such a magnifi-

cent horse. He turned to the king and asked if he might try to tame him. His father said, "What, you tame a horse that has been too much for the king's grooms?" But he let him try.

It was a very sunny day, and Alexander had noticed that Bucephalus' shadow fell on the ground just in front of him and frightened him. So he ran to the horse and, taking hold of the bridle, turned him about so that he faced the sun, and the shadow fell behind him, where he could not see it. Then he began to talk to him and stroke his face, and before long he was on his back, and the horse was tamed.

The king was so delighted that he gave Bucephalus to Alexander, and when he died shortly after and Alexander became king, this horse helped him to conquer the world. For many years he carried his master through battle, and at last was killed in India. There is a town in India now that is called Bucephalia, after him.

Alexander conquered Bucephalus and took away his fear simply by turning his face toward the sun.

We have been told to look to Jesus. I think that most of our troubles come when we turn our faces away from Him, as this horse turned his away from the sun.

Some days we wake up in the morning and

everything goes wrong. We are cross and fretful, and don't like our breakfast, and there is trouble at school, and we are punished, and altogether it is a bad day all the way through. Do you know what the trouble was? We did not look to Jesus that morning and ask Him to help us through the day. Instead of that we turned our faces away and the black shadow of trouble was there all day to vex us.

The good Apostle Paul had many troubles in his life, but one day when he was talking of them he said, "None of these things trouble me." They did not trouble him because he kept his face toward Jesus, and always went to Him in time of need.

Here is something to remember. When the shadows of life become black and troublesome and you are afraid, look to Jesus, and see how very quickly they all pass away.

Doing Our Best

"Not slothful in business."—ROMANS xii. 11.

PAUL couldn't stand a person who was lazy. He tells us to do our very best with everything that we undertake. Most of you know about the "Corn Clubs" which the government officers started several years ago among the boys of the South. Many of the farmers were not getting half as much from the land as they should. The land was poor, the crops were poor, and the farmers were poorer, because they did not know how to farm in the right way. These government officers tried to teach them to do better, but they wouldn't learn. So they gave up trying to do anything with the men and went to the boys. They taught them to raise corn in a new way. Then they offered prizes to those who produced the most from an acre of ground. The average yield in Alabama had been seventeen bushels to the acre. There was a boy in the State who two years ago raised two hundred and twenty-eight bushels from one acre. This set the men to thinking, and they began to do things in a different way too.

Now what was the trouble before? They had had as good land, and as good arms, and as good brains, but they had not done their very best, and until they did that they could not succeed.

No man or boy ever gets the most out of the soil, or the world, or himself, until he has tried his very best. There is no better time for boys and girls to think about this than now, when so many of us are beginning our school work for another year. There are some of you who will go to school and you will do as little as you can, just enough to get through, and then, after a while, you will wonder why you do not get more out of your school days. It isn't the clothes you wear, or who your family are, or even the brains that you have, that will count the most during your school days. It is your diligence. It is whether you are going to do your very best with the tasks that are given you.

There was a boy in Scotland many years ago who had to leave school when he was ten years old and go to work in a factory. He had to work from six in the morning till eight at night. He made up his mind that he would have an education. At first he tried to study at home at night, but that would not do. He was so tired that he fell asleep over his book. So what do you think

he did? He took his book to the factory with him, set it on the spinning machine, and studied while he worked. In this way he went through book after book till he was ready for the university. That boy was David Livingstone. He did great things with a very poor opportunity. Some of you are going to do a very little with fine opportunities. There is not one of you who has not far more chance than this boy had.

This is what we ought all to remember as we look forward to the year in school: Be diligent. Do your very best.

But Paul meant more than this. He wanted us to be diligent not only in our school work, but in our Christian lives, too.

Once, while in the West, an old man said to me, "I joined the Church back East, when I was a boy, but I haven't worked at it much for over forty years." That old man had the right idea, though he did not carry it out. Being a Christian is a real business. It is the biggest, and the hardest, and the finest business in the world, and God wants us all to work at it all the time, and do our very best. I have been thinking, if some of us did not work any harder over our lessons for the day-school, than we do over the lesson for the Sunday school, we would never have much chance of getting into the high school by and by. God wants us all to be as

diligent and careful over our work in the Sunday school and the Church, as we are over our work in the day-school and in business.

VI

A Little Bit Late

"And the door was shut."—MATTHEW xxv. 10.

JESUS told the story of a wedding. There were some girls who were invited. In the days when Jesus lived, if people came late to a wedding, they could not get in. The door was shut. They had to be there before the wedding began. They could not come straggling in whenever they felt like it, as they do now.

These girls of whom Jesus spoke, had received the invitation, but they were thoughtless and careless, and did not begin to get ready till it was very late, and when at last they came to the door it was shut and they could not get in. They missed the wedding and the fun, and the wedding cake, and everything, because they were a little bit late.

It will not do to be late. It makes trouble for ourselves or for somebody always. The great battle of Waterloo was lost by Napoleon because someone was late. He had ordered Marshall Grouchy to march with his army to help him. Marshall

Grouchy did not start at once, as he should have done. When he did move Waterloo had been fought and Napoleon had been defeated.

There are several reasons why children should be very careful about being late. One is that they are starting habits that will follow them all their lives. Every morning I see children going late to school. And they are usually the same children. They think that it will not make any difference if they are a few minutes behind. But all the time they are forming a habit that will stay by them all their lives, and some day they will be late when it matters very much.

There was a man like that who had fallen into the habit of always being late. He had a fine position. One day the firm that employed him sent him to another city on a very important errand. There was only one train he could take and he was told that he must not miss it. He was late in starting, and on the way he stopped to talk to someone. When he reached the station it was one minute past the time for the train to go. He rushed through the waiting room and up to the gate, but it was shut. He had lost the train, and he lost his place, because he was a little bit late.

Then we must be careful about being late because of the trouble it makes for others.

There were eight women once, who had an important meeting set for a certain hour. Seven of them were on time, but the eighth kept the rest waiting for a quarter of an hour. When she came in, she said, "I hope you will excuse me for being late." There was a plain-spoken old Quaker lady there. She said, "I don't know whether we can excuse you or not. It is bad enough for you to have lost a quarter hour of your own time. But there are seven others here whose time you have wasted for a quarter of an hour each, making nearly two hours, which was not your own." When we are tardy we waste other people's time as well as our own, and we have no right to steal their time any more than we have a right to steal their money or their watches.

Being late is a bad habit, and bad habits are like weeds. They ought to be rooted up and destroyed. You should all be sowing the seeds of good habits. One of the most useful of all habits is punctuality. Always try to be on time. Then other people will come to rely upon you.

But there is something more important about this subject than anything that has yet been said. In this story that Jesus told about the wedding feast, He was really thinking of heaven. We all expect to go to heaven sometimes. We have all been in-

vited, and we are all going, we think. But some of us are putting off getting ready, as these foolish girls did. We will delay until, when by and by, we do start, maybe we will find that the door is shut. We will be too late.

When you have anything to do, the best time to do it is now. Don't put it off. You all intend to be Christians some time: Do not delay. Now is the time.

VII

A Child Christian

"Jesus increased in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and man."—LUKE ii. 52.

WHAT is it for a boy or girl to be a Christian? There are so many people who have wrong ideas about this. They think that if a child isn't a Christian in the same way that a grown-up person is, he isn't a Christian at all. That is not fair, is it? Children do not walk like grown people do. Instead of going soberly along, they skip and run and jump. They do not read the same sort of books, or play the same kind of games, that men and women do. And they are not Christians in the same way their fathers and mothers are.

Sometimes a good woman will say to me, "I am so troubled about my little girl. I do not believe that she will ever be a good Christian. She cannot sit still, and she does not listen to the sermon, and she is so full of mischief."

I say to her, "Of course she is full of mischief and can't sit still. You musn't expect a little girl to be a Christian like a grown-

up woman. She will have to be a Christian in her own way, which is a little girl's way. By and by, when she has grown up, she will be a Christian in your way. Some of the finest Christians I have ever known were little boys and girls, as full of fun and mischief as they could be. But they were boy and girl Christians."

Now let me tell you how boys and girls can be Christians. First, they must never be afraid to show their colors. There was a boy once who went away to boarding school. He was put in the same room with several other boys. When it came time to go to bed he knelt down and said his prayers. The other boys began to laugh and make fun of him. They threw things at him and tried to make him stop. But the next night he knelt down and said his prayers again. The boys didn't make fun of him then. After a night or two more, one or two of the other boys started to say their prayers, too. They had known all along that they ought to pray, but they had been afraid. Because that one boy was not afraid to show his colors, it made better boys of all of them.

Never be afraid to show your colors. If you are Christians don't be afraid to have other people know it. It will do you good and will do them good, too.

Then, second, Christian boys and girls

must be brave enough to fight against Satan. There are some boys who are brave enough when it comes to fighting other boys, but they haven't very much courage when Satan is around.

The greatest teacher who ever lived in England, Dr. Thomas Arnold, once said, "I have had enough of boys who love God. I want more boys who love God and hate the devil."

If we are to be real, true Christians we must hate the devil, and be brave enough to resist him when he comes trying to make us do what we all know is wrong.

Third, Christian boys and girls always obey their parents. In His twelfth year Jesus went up to Jerusalem. After this visit we are told that He went home with Joseph and Mary and was subject unto them. The best way that Jesus could do God's will when He was a boy was by being obedient to them, and doing all that He could to help them. The old records say that Jesus helped Joseph by picking up the chips and shavings in the carpenter shop, and He helped His mother by carrying water for her from the well. There is no better way for boys and girls to show that they are Christians than by being obedient and helpful at home.

There is one more thing that boys and

girls must remember when they start out to be Christians. We must never forget that we are partners of Jesus. If you have a very good chum you always share everything that you have with him. If you are thinking of going somewhere or of doing something, you go and tell him about it. When we are Christians Jesus becomes our chum. We ought to tell Him everything that we are planning to do, and if it is something that is not going to please Him we ought not to do it.

They said that Professor Blackie always wore an old plaid shawl about his shoulders. One day a friend asked him why he did it. He said, "Long ago, when wife and I were young, she came to me one day and said, 'Your overcoat is very thin and shabby.' I told her that I could not afford to have a new one. It costs too much. So she went upstairs and fetched her plaid shawl and put it over my shoulders that winter day, and now I always wear the plaid to remember her love."

That is the biggest part of being a Christian. We must never forget our friend and Lord, Jesus Christ.

VIII

Words That Fit

"A word fitly spoken is like apples of gold in pictures of silver."—PROVERBS XXV. 11.

DID you ever have a pair of shoes that did not fit? You know how they pinched, and rubbed, and hurt, until you were very glad to take them off. Sometimes words do not fit. Instead of being easy, and comfortable, they are stiff and tight and uncomfortable.

When Joseph was a boy he had a dream one night. It was a queer dream and the next day he told it to his brothers. It made them very angry. A little while after Joseph dreamed again. And what do you think he did? He went and told this dream, too, to his brothers. It was a very foolish thing to do, for he knew that it would make them angry. His words did not fit and they made his brothers very uncomfortable.

Once in college one of the boys went home for the Christmas holiday. While he was at home his father died. It was a great shock to him and almost broke his heart. A week or two later he came back. One of the boys met him, and said, "I hope you had a good time while you were away." The

poor boy did not say a word, but turned away and walked off alone. His friend did not mean to hurt him, but the words did not fit.

Sometimes when we are downhearted, and discouraged, and need some one to cheer us up, along comes a friend who says something that makes us feel a great deal worse than we did before, because the words do not fit.

I have a good tailor. When he makes a suit for me I know it is going to fit. There are some people like that. Their words always fit. There was a good woman whom everyone loved. She was the most popular person in the village. A stranger came one day and asked what it was that made every one like her so much. She was not good-looking. She was not rich, and could not wear very fine clothes. Some one said to him, "I will tell you why we all love her. She always says something that makes us feel better." That was the secret. Her words were always a fit and people loved her.

There is a little story of Bishop Wilberforce. He was walking along the street one day when he met a crowd of boys. After he had passed they began to call out impudent things after the good man. One of them shouted out, "Can you tell me the way to

heaven?" Now the bishop might have gone on and paid no attention to the boy, but he didn't. He turned around and said, "Yes, my boy, I can tell you the way to heaven. Just take a sharp turn to the right, and keep on straight." That boy grew up to be a good and useful man, and he never forgot that answer of the bishop's. It was a word that fitted him.

When you go to the shoe store to buy a pair of shoes, does the shoe man take down the very first pair that he sees and put them on you? No, indeed, you would have a poor fit if he did. He finds out the size that fits you, and that is the shoe that he sells you. That is what we ought to do when we speak. We ought to think of the people to whom we are speaking, and make our words fit, so that they are made comfortable and happy.

There is something more in the text that we must not pass by. Solomon says that, "words that fit" are like "apples of gold in pictures of silver." Let us see what that means. There were no apples in Palestine such as we have. The word "apples" means oranges. The finest oranges in the world are the Jaffa oranges that grow in Palestine. They are big and luscious, and look like yellow gold. By "pictures of silver" he means the orange blossoms. The orange tree is the only tree on which you can see fruit

and blossoms growing at the same time. And there is no more beautiful sight in the world than an orange tree, with the lovely golden oranges and a little wreath of blossoms around each orange. It was the very finest sight that Solomon could think of, and he says that words that fit are like those lovely orange trees. They are a delight to every one who comes near.

When Jesus was here the people loved to hear Him talk. Luke says that they marvelled at the gracious words that came out of His mouth. A gracious word is a word that fits. Jesus knew how to say always the right words. This is a fine thing for young people to cultivate. Be careful what you say. Never speak a word that hurts someone else. Words, you know, can hurt quite as much as a blow, and the word will be remembered long after a blow is forgotten. Try to have your words as beautiful as a golden orange, framed in a circle of silvery blossoms.

IX

The Bush That Burned and Burned and Wouldn't Burn Up

"And he looked, and behold, the bush burned with fire, and the bush was not consumed."—Exodus iii. 2.

When Moses was a young man he was guilty of a great crime and had to run away. He went off into the land of Midian and hired himself to a man who owned a great many sheep. Every day Moses took the sheep off into the wilderness in search of pasture. One day something very strange happened. It was something like this. In the wilderness there were many thorn bushes, and as the sheep came along they became caught on the thorns. Then, when they pulled themselves away, they left some of their fine wool sticking on the thorns. That morning Jethro, the man who owned the sheep, said to Moses, "Moses, have you noticed how the thorns on that big bush out there by the rock are tearing the wool off the backs of these sheep. Look at that ewe there. Her fine fleece has been almost ruined. We are going to need all the wool we can get this winter. I think you had

better take some fire out there and burn that bush.

So Moses took some fire, and went out to the bush. He piled the leaves around it and set them on fire, and before long there was the finest kind of a blaze. But there was something very strange about that fire. The bush burned and burned, but it didn't burn up.

You have all seen the iron gas-logs that people have in their fire-places. They turn on the gas and touch a match to it and the log begins to burn. But the log never burns up. Now this is not strange, for we all know that we cannot burn iron. But suppose you were to see a bush that was burning, and did not burn up. You could be sure that there was something very wonderful about it.

That is what Moses saw that day, and as he came nearer to try to see what it meant, God spoke to him and told him the meaning of the burning bush.

The children of Israel at that time were in Egypt, and the king had made up his mind that he was going to destroy them all. The people were very sad and despondent, for it seemed as if they did not have a friend in the whole world. But God told Moses that just as the fire had burned and burned and yet the bush did not burn up, so the king of Egypt could do his very worst but

he never could destroy the children of Israel. God would not let him.

When I was a little boy I used to worry about things sometimes. Maybe some of you boys and girls are worrying now. There are wicked men and nations in the world that are trying to destroy everything that we love and care for. But we must not worry. After that fire had burned and burned till it had burned out, the bush was standing there as straight and strong as it was before. And we may be sure that when wicked men have done all the evil that they can, the things that we love will all be here as they have always been.

In Pilgrim's Progress we read about a house in which there was a fire burning in the fireplace. That fire was called the Light of Truth. And the devil was standing before the fire trying to put it out by pouring water on it. But the more water he poured the more the fire burned. The man who saw it couldn't understand it. At last he went around behind the fire, and what do you suppose he found? Jesus was standing there, with a can of oil in His hand, and whenever the devil threw some water on the fire, He would throw oil on it secretly, so that the more the devil tried to put it out the higher and brighter it burned. It is always so.

The more Satan hates us and tries to de-

stroy us, the more Jesus loves us and helps us.

The emblem of the Church of Scotland is the burning bush. There was a time hundreds of years ago when tyrants tried to destroy the Church of Scotland by persecuting and killing the Christians. But the more they killed the more the church grew. It was like the bush that Moses saw. Men might kindle the fire about it, and pile on the fuel, but they never could burn it up.

To all of us this story of Moses ought to be very precious. It teaches that evil can never really harm those who love God.

X

Little Foxes

"The little foxes that spoil the vines."—Song of Solomon ii. 15.

In the land of Palestine there were many vineyards. These vineyards were surrounded on all sides by thorn hedges to keep the thieves and the animals out. The foxes were their special enemies. The owners of the vines had to be on the lookout for the foxes. They had to make the hedges very high and strong to keep them out. Sometimes when the hedge was thick enough and strong enough to keep out a big fox, there would be a small hole somewhere that a little one could crawl through, and the little foxes could do as much damage as the large ones. So Solomon spoke of the "little foxes that spoil the vines."

A man a few days ago was showing his fine chickens. They are kept in coops that are surrounded by strong wire. He said, "We have our greatest trouble with the rats. It isn't hard to keep the big animals away from them, but the rats are so small that they can get in almost anywhere."

It is the same way with disease. We are always on the watch against big diseases. If there is small-pox, or scarlet fever, or diphtheria in the neighborhood, how carefully everyone watches for fear he will catch it. Nobody pays much attention to a cold. It is such a little thing we think it doesn't matter much, but sometimes a cold is as dangerous and fatal as a far worse disease. It is the little things that we must be on the lookout for, and against which we must guard ourselves—the little foxes that spoil the vines.

But it was really our sins that Solomon was speaking of when he told us about these little foxes. We are not in much danger from big sins. We watch ourselves and keep them out. It is the little ones that get in and spoil things.

They used to say that when an old fox came to a hedge, and found there a little hole that he could not squeeze through, the sly old fellow would go home and bring one of the little foxes and put him through. The little fox would get the grapes and bring them out to the big fox.

Let me tell you about four big foxes and four little ones. One of the big foxes is lying. We are ashamed to tell a lie. There is a hedge that he cannot get through. It is the ninth commandment, and the teachings

of our parents. No indeed, we keep him out. We wouldn't tell lies for anything. But he has a little fox that he sends in. The little fox's name is "Exaggeration." Some people can never tell a story, or repeat something they have heard, without making it a little bigger than it really is. We keep the big lie out, but often this little one, whose name is Exaggeration, gets in. That is one little fox.

Another big old fox that we keep out is stealing. We would none of us allow such a thing as that to come in, would we? Why, stealing is one of the worst things that we know anything about. But stealing has a little fox that comes along sometimes and squeezes in. The name of this little fox is "Borrowing." None of us would take something from somebody else and keep it. That would be stealing, but we might borrow it and then forget to give it back. That is another little fox to look out for.

Another big fox is swearing. Swearing is vulgar and coarse and wicked. We keep the hedge high and tight, so he can't come in. But there is a little fox that goes along with him that will creep in unless we look out. The name of this little fox is "Coarse Language." There are so many boys who would not swear, but they will use rough words that do as much harm as oaths.

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There is one more fox, a very dangerous one, I must tell you about. His name is "Murder." Murder is the most awful of crimes. Not one of us would for an instant think of allowing such a beast to come into our lives. But there is a little fox here too. Did you ever become so angry that you thought murder, even if you did not commit it? Jesus said once that He who permitted angry passions to get the better of him is guilty of murder. We must make the fence so tight that this little beast cannot get in.

You see, it will not do to guard against the big foxes and let the little ones in. It is the little foxes that spoil the vines.

XI

Our Prayers

"I love the Lord because he hath heard my voice and my prayer."—PSALM cxvi. 1.

WHEN we first began to talk, our good mothers taught us to kneel down at night beside the bed and pray, and to believe that God can hear our prayers. Many of us have never gone to sleep at night without first saying our prayers, asking God to keep us through the night.

Sometimes maybe we think that God is so big, and so great, and so busy, that He hasn't time to think about what boys and girls are saying. If you were to go to the office of one of the busiest men in this city to-morrow, he would very likely not be able to see you. He has too much to do to bother himself about boys and girls. But suppose that man was your own father. He would have time. He would always be glad to see you and to hear all about your troubles and your wants.

Now God is our Father, and there never is a time when He is too busy to hear boys and girls when they want to pray to Him.

In London, at the top of the Royal Exchange, there is a great weathercock to show which way the wind blows. It is made in the shape of a cricket. We have seen weathercocks at the top of buildings that looked like birds, and trumpets, and arrows, but we do not often see one in the shape of a cricket.

There is an interesting story about that weather vane. Three hundred and fifty years ago there was a very poor woman walking along a country lane with a little baby boy in her arms. By and by she came to a field. She opened the gate, laid the baby down behind the hedge and went away and left it.

In a little while a boy came down that lane. All at once he heard a chirping. It was the loudest cricket that he ever heard. He had been thinking about going fishing that very afternoon. Did you ever go fishing and use crickets for bait? I have. Well, this boy wanted that cricket, so he hopped over that hedge to get it, and what do you think he found near where the cricket was chirping? It was the baby. He took him home to his mother and she took care of him. That baby grew up and became Sir Thomas Gresham, who was three times elected Lord Mayor of London. It was he who built the Royal Exchange, and put that

cricket on the top. He always loved crickets, for it was the chirping of one that led the boy to find him. So he put one on the building to show that God always watches over His children, and is always thinking about them.

One thing we must remember when we pray. God helps those who try to help themselves. If we do not help ourselves we ought not to expect God to help us.

There were two little girls on their way to school one day. One of them always knew her lessons and the other one never did. The little girl who never knew her lessons said to the other, "How do you learn your lessons so well?" She replied, "I pray to God and He always helps me with them." So the other little girl thought that she would try that, too, but the next day she did not know any more than usual. She said she was not going to pray any more, that it did not do any good. The other girl said to her, "Did you study real hard after you had prayed?" "No," she said, "I didn't study. I thought if I prayed that was all there was to it."

God couldn't help her, because she did not help herself. God wants us to pray when we need help and then do the very best that we can ourselves.

XII

Perseverance

"Seek the Lord and his strength, seek his face continually."—1 CHRON. xvi. 11.

ONE of the fine stories of the Old Testament is about Elijah the prophet. There had been a great drought in the land of Israel for three years and a half. No rain had fallen; there was very little to eat. The springs and streams were dry, and most of the cattle had died. There was great distress and trouble everywhere. So Elijah went to the Lord for help. He kneeled down and asked the Lord to make it rain. Then he sent his servant to look out and see if there were any clouds in the sky. He came back and said he could not see one anywhere. So he went on praying, and told his servant to go and look. But there was not a cloud to be seen. Some people would have been discouraged, and said, "What is the use of praying, anyway?" But Elijah kept on with his prayers, and after he had prayed seven times, the servant came back and told him that there was a little cloud coming up in the West. Before long the whole sky was

filled with black clouds and there was a fine rain. If Elijah had given up because the answer did not come all at once that rain would not have come.

Every morning we have news in our papers from Europe and every part of the world. Do you know how we get that news from so far away? It is telegraphed under the sea. There is a cable that reaches under the ocean all the way from America to Europe, and they send messages over this cable. The first Atlantic cable was laid by Cyrus Field. Mr. Field believed that it could be done and he set to work. He struggled thirteen years before he succeeded. People told him that he was crazy, that it could never be done. His money gave out, and his health failed. But he never gave up and at last the work was done. He said when it was finished that he had prayed God that he might live till it was completed.

Dr. Arnold, one of the greatest teachers who ever lived, once said, "The boys who get on in the world are not the boys with the most talents, but with the most energy." They are the boys who keep on trying even if they do not succeed at first.

One of my friends was telling me of a little mouse he saw. He was sitting in his library reading one evening when he heard a sound, and looking down, he saw a tiny lit-

tle mouse. He had found a peanut and was trying to get it to his hole in the wall. The peanut was too big for him to take in his mouth. So he tried to hold it between his front paws and his chin. When he had almost reached the hole the peanut slipped out of his grasp and fell back on the floor. He went back and took hold and started all over again. But each time, when he had it almost at the hole, he lost it again. The mouse tried seven times before he succeeded.

When you come home from school with a hard problem and fail to solve it, what do you do? I know what some of you do. You give it up, or you go and ask someone else to work it for you. The only real way to succeed is to keep on trying, and keep on trying, till you do solve it.

Now, this is what God wants us to do in prayer. If you ask Him for something and He does not give it to you all at once, you must not think that He is never going to give it. We may have to pray as many times as Elijah did, or perhaps more than seven times, before God sends the answer. But it always comes if we keep on praying.

XIII

How to Pray

"And God heard the voice of the lad."—GENESIS xxi. 17.

SOMETIMES God does not give us what we ask for in our prayers because we are not ready to receive it. I knew a boy who went to his father and asked him to give him a watch. He was a very little fellow. He could not tell time, and was not old enough yet to know how to take care of a watch, so his father did not give it to him then. He waited till the boy was older, and could tell the time, and knew how to be careful of a watch. Then he gave him one.

God has to do that with us sometimes. We ask Him for things which we would not know how to use if we had them. So He waits awhile, till we are a little older and wiser and better, and then He gives them to us.

God cannot answer some of our prayers because we go to Him in the wrong spirit. Almost all of us know some little prayer that we repeat every night before we go to bed. There are some nights when we are so tired, or in such a hurry, that we kneel down and rush through our little prayer without thinking what we are saying. What do you

think God thinks of a prayer like that? We can't expect Him to listen, if we are not listening and paying attention ourselves.

Most boys have played with a bow and arrow. If the bow-string is loose and you fit the arrow on it and try to shoot, it will do nothing more than fall at your feet. But if you tighten the string, and then fit the arrow and shoot, it will fly off a long distance. That is the difference between saying our prayers and praying. When we kneel down and say our prayers, without thinking what we are doing or saying, they do not go very far, but when we really pray with all our heart, then the prayer goes up to God and He answers.

Before we close this subject I must tell you what we ought to talk to God about in our prayers. First of all, we must thank Him for the good things that He has given us. Everything that we have has come from Him. If one of your friends gives you a gift and you forget to thank him for it, he will not be very likely to give you anything again very soon. God is like our earthly friends. He likes to be thanked, and we must not forget this part of our prayers.

Then we ought never to pray without asking Him to forgive our sins. We all do a great many wrong and wicked things every day. God says that if we come and tell Him

about our sins He will forgive them, so we ought always to ask for forgiveness of sins.

Third, we can ask God to give us what we want. But we must be very careful how we ask it. If you wanted a quarter and went to your father for it, do you think he would be more likely to give it to you if you said, "Father, I want some money, and you must give it to me," or if you said, "Father, I need some money. I wish you would give it to me, unless you think it would be better for me not to have it." God wants us to ask Him for what we need, but He also wants us to be willing not to have it if it is not best for us.

Again, we must not forget others in our prayers. When we meet a person who is always talking about himself we know that he is a selfish person, and we soon become very tired of him. God does not want us to talk about ourselves alone in our prayers. That would be a very selfish sort of a prayer. We ought never to forget to ask Him to remember those who have not the same good things that we have.

Last, He wants us to tell Him that we love Him and are trying to serve Him. Your mother likes to hear you tell her that you love her, and no man ought to be too old to do that. God too loves to hear us say that we love and serve Him.

XIV

The Eagle's Nest

"As the eagle stirreth up her nest."—DEUTERONOMY xxxii. 11.

MOSES, who was the author of the book of Deuteronomy, had lived many years of his life in the wilderness, and among the mountains. He knew something of the habits of the wild animals and the birds. No doubt he had often seen the great eagles circling about the mountains and searching for food to carry to their little ones. The eagle, you know, makes her nest in the rocks far up in the tops of the mountains. She makes the nest of thorns, and over the thorns she puts some very soft wool or down. There in the nest the eagle lays her eggs, and there they are hatched, and there they stay. By and by it is time for the little eagles to fly. What do you think the old eagle does then? She goes to the nest and with her great talons she tears off the soft down and wool, so that the sharp thorns prick the little birds and they have to fly to get away from the thorns. But that is not all that the old eagle does. When the little eagle tumbles out of the nest

to get away from the rough, sharp thorns, she gets under him with her great, powerful wings, so that he cannot fall, and helps him to fly.

Now it seems pretty hard for the old eagle to tear up the pretty nest that is so warm and comfortable, so that the thorns hurt the little birds, but she has got to do it if they are ever to learn to fly. She hurts them because she wants to help them and make them strong.

Our fathers and mothers have to do that sometimes. There was a father and mother who had one son whom they loved more than anything else in all the world. They had a beautiful home and this boy had everything that his heart could wish for. One day, when he was not a little boy any longer, his father said to the mother, "If we keep our boy here always and take care of him and let him have his own way, he will never learn to make his own way in the world. He will never be a strong man. I think it is about time that we make him start out for himself."

The next day the father called the boy and told him that he was a man now, and it was time that he was earning his own living. So he found him a position and made him take care of himself.

Maybe that boy thought when the father

sent him out to make his own way that he did not love him any more. But it was because he did love him so that he did it. He was like the eagle that stirs up the nest so that the little ones will learn to fly.

God does the same thing to us sometimes. When we are happy and contented and everything is going so smoothly, God sends trouble and sorrow and disappointment to us. We think that He does not love us. But it is because He does love us that He sends it. He wants to make us strong and good.

I heard a great man say not very long ago that all the very best things that he had learned in life had come to him through his sorrows. As the eagle stirred up the nest, so God came to him and made him leave his selfishness and ease and fly away to bigger and better things.

When the little eagles grow big and strong, then they thank the old mother eagle for making them fly for themselves. And by and by, when we know more, we will be glad that our fathers and mothers, and the good God who loves us, make it hard for us sometimes.

XV

Imitators

"Be ye therefore imitators of God, as dear children."—
EPHESIANS v. 1.

Paul tells us that we ought to be imitators of God. What is an imitator? An imitator is one who looks at someone else and tries to be like him. Little boys like to imitate their fathers. They watch and whatever their fathers do they try to do, too. Little girls love to imitate their mothers. I came upon two little girls this week. They were playing keep-house, and each one had several dolls for children. They were talking to those dolls as they had heard their mothers talk to them. They were imitators of their mothers.

Not only do we imitate our parents when we are little, we are imitators all our lives. If there is someone whom we admire very much we are sure to try to do as he does. It is very important what sort of people we imitate. If they are good we, too, will be good; if they are bad, we will be like them.

Paul tells us to be imitators of God. That is the best advice that was ever given to

children. Imitate Jesus and your life will be like His.

Let us see how we can do this. What did Jesus do that we can imitate? First, we are told that He obeyed His parents. He did what they wanted Him to do. He helped His mother in the work of the house, and in caring for His brothers and sisters. He assisted Joseph in the carpenter shop. He was good and gentle and kind at home. A great man once said that no boy ever became great who did not honor his parents. If we are to be imitators of Jesus the best place to begin is right here. We must honor and obey our parents.

Jesus did another thing that every boy and girl ought to imitate. He kept Himself unspotted from sin. Let me tell you what that means. Some day, when you are very small, your mother put a clean dress on you and told you not to get any spots on it. But there was a fine mud-puddle in front of the house and you forgot all about the clean dress, and the first thing you knew it was spotted with mud. Every time we do a mean thing, or tell a lie, or lose our tempers, our souls are spotted like that dress with the mud on it. Jesus wants us to keep our characters spotless. That is what He did, and if we are imitators of Him we will try very hard to be like Him.

There was a third thing that Jesus did that we ought to imitate. He went about doing good. Someone was telling me of a little boy she knew. She said, "He goes around trying to see what mischief he can get into." Jesus went about trying to see what good He could do. Suppose we try that, boys and girls. See how much good we can do in a day. It is much more fun than trying to see how much mischief we can get into.

Long ago there was a little Greek slave girl. She was ragged and dirty and untidy and ignorant, because she did not know any better, for there had never been anyone to teach her. One day she was walking along one of the streets of Athens when she came to a beautiful fountain. There was the statue of a beautiful woman above the fountain. She looked at the statue for a few moments, and then she looked down into the water and noticed that her face was dirty. She made up her mind that she would come back the next day with a clean face, like the face of the statue. So the next day when she came her face was clean. Then she saw that the woman's hair was neat and tidy. She looked down into the water and saw how tousled hers was, and said to herself, "I'll make my hair like hers before I come back to-morrow." The next day her hair

was neat, and her old torn dress was mended and clean. And so day by day as she looked at the beautiful statue she became finer and better herself. That is what we are to do. We are to look every day at Jesus, and try every day to be a little more like Him. That is the best way to be "imitators of God, as dear children."

XVI

What God Sees

"When thou wast under the fig tree, I saw thee."—JOHN i. 48.

ONE day a man named Nathanael came to Jesus. He had never seen the Lord before, and he thought that Jesus did not know anything about him, but the Lord did know him. Nathanael couldn't understand it. He said to Jesus, "How do you know of me?" The Lord answered, "When you were there under the fig tree I knew you." A little before this Nathanael had gone out to a quiet corner in his garden to say his prayers. He thought that no one knew he was there. But Jesus saw him.

We sometimes think that we are all alone, and no one will see what we are doing, or hear what we are saying, but we are never alone, for God is always there and can see and hear what we do and say.

A little while ago, Mr. Gerard, the Ambassador to Germany, came home to America. He said that while he lived in Berlin there were a number of German servants in his house, who were spies. They watched everything that he did, and tried to listen to every word that he said. He had to be very careful all the time because there was

always someone who was listening and watching.

I went into a home one day and found that the children had been in mischief. Their father and mother were away and they thought that no one could see or hear. But there was One who did know. It was Jesus. He saw Nathanael that day under the fig tree, when he thought that no one was around. And he saw those children too when they thought they were alone.

And he sees not only the wicked things that we do. He sees the good things, too. No one ever does a kind act, or speaks a kind word, that God does not know about it and remember it. You may do a good deed and forget all about it. And the person for whom you do it may forget. But God never forgets.

There is a story of two little children standing before the window of a store in one of our large cities. The children were very poor and very ragged. They were looking with longing eyes at the good things to eat they saw in the window. The little girl who was older, was very sad because she knew that they had no money to buy anything. Before long the little boy began to cry.

"Harry," said the little girl, "Don't cry. Let's play we have some money, and are go-

ing in to buy something for mother. What would you get her."

"I'd get her that big orange," said the little boy, "maybe it would make her better."

Just then someone behind them said, "Is your mother sick?" "Yes," said the girl, "and the doctor says she ought to have good things to eat, and we are just playing that we are going to buy them for her."

The man said, "Come inside and you can choose what you want for your mother."

"But," said the girl, "we haven't any money."

"Never mind," said the man, "come anyway."

So they went into the store and he filled a basket with good things to take to the sick mother. When the man gave it to her, the little girl said, "What is your name"?

"O, never mind my name," he said.

"But," said she, "mother has always taught me to thank God for what He gives us and I want to tell Him about you."

But the man went away without telling his name. And that night when the little girl knelt down to say her prayers, she said, "Remember the kind man who helped us today. You know his name."

Yes, God knew his name and He knows the name of every boy and every girl, and every man and every woman who does a generous and thoughtful thing for others.

XVII

Scars

"What are those wounds?"—ZECHARIAH xiii. 6.

WE are to think to-day about scars. There was a little girl in the hospital not long ago, where she had gone to have an operation. I asked her mother about her. She said, "She is doing well, but I am so afraid it is going to leave a scar." She did not want an ugly mark on her little girl's pretty face when she was well. We none of us like scars. But it all depends on what sort of scars they are. There are some scars that tell of noble, brave deeds.

There was a young English soldier who was fearfully wounded. For many long weeks he lay in the hospital. At last he was well and ready to go back to the front. But there was a great scar on his face. He wrote a letter home to his mother in which he said: "Mother, I have good news to tell you. I have a scar on my face. Both of my brothers have been wounded, and now I have been wounded, too. When you see this scar you will know that your youngest boy was willing to give his life for his coun-

try." He was proud of that scar and I know his mother was proud of it, too.

But there are other scars that are not so honorable, of which we ought to be ashamed.

There was once a little boy whose name was Robert. Robert had a bad temper and very often was unkind to his little brother. One day his father set up a post in front of the house, and said, "Robert, this is your post. Every time you lose your temper, or are unkind, we will drive a nail in the post. And whenever you go through a half day without being naughty we will pull out a nail. If you are good a whole day we will take out two nails.

Robert thought this was a fine plan, and he made up his mind that he would not have any nails driven into that new post. For a whole day he was good. But the second day he forgot himself, and had two nails driven into the post. When night came he was ashamed, and determined to have them taken out to-morrow. But the next day was rainy and they had to stay in, and you know how hard it is for children to be good when they have to stay around the house all the time. That day he had three more nails driven into the post. Then Robert thought, "What is the use of trying to be good. I may as well give it up." So he didn't try and before long that post was a strange sight. It was full

of nails, and every time he looked at it Robert became a little more ashamed. You see his father had put it where he would see it every time he went out of the house. He thought, "I will try once more to get some of those nails out." He tried and the first day out came two nails. The next day one more came out. The third day he forgot and they had to drive one more in. But Robert kept on and before long every nail was out. When the last one had been pulled out the father said, "My boy, look at your post, every nail is gone. I believe you have overcome your temper." Then Robert saw something he had not noticed before. "Father," he said, "the nails are gone, but the nail-holes are there still." "Yes," said his father, "they are there to remind you that you must be very careful."

God is very good. He forgives our sins if we are sorry and ask for forgiveness. But He leaves the scars of the sins there to remind us in time to come that we must be very careful.

Once I saw a man who had led a very wicked life. He had been converted however, and was doing all that he could to atone for the wrongs he had done. His right hand was gone. It had been lost when he was doing something that he ought not to have done. He used to hold up the arm from

which the hand was gone and say, "There is one of the scars that sin left me."

God forgave Jacob's sins but he limped all the rest of his life.

Paul, the good apostle Paul, was wicked in his youth and did many things of which he was very sorry afterward. Years after he said that God had left him a thorn in the flesh, lest he should become too proud. He had left the scar there to remind him to be careful and watchful against evil.

Little Robert was not the only one who has trouble with nail-holes. When we sin, the sin may be forgiven, and it will be, if we go to Jesus, and ask forgiveness, but the scar will be there. It is God's reminder to be very careful what we do, and what we say, and what we think.

XVIII

How to Make Hard Things Easy

"Love never faileth."—1 Cor. xiii. 8.

Once there was a barn door that was very hard to move. It was one of those old fashioned doors we used to see in the country. It slid along on a track, and sometimes it was almost impossible to open it. At last it stuck fast and no one could move it. So they sent for a carpenter. He took it off, and put some oil in it, and then it moved so easily that you could have pushed it open with your little finger. It needed oil, that was all.

There are many things in life that are like that barn door. They are hard. We need something to make them go, and I am going to tell you this morning what will always make hard things easy. It is love.

One night not long ago, a woman and a little boy were walking along Freemason Street. They were coming home from market. The woman was dressed in black. She is a widow and is very poor, and there is no one to help her but that little boy. She had her arms full of bundles and the little boy

was carrying a basket almost as big as himself, and that was full too. Every few steps he set the basket down and rested. I heard the mother say, "That is a pretty heavy load, isn't it, little man?" He replied, "No, it isn't a bit heavy." Do you know what it was that made that heavy basket seem light for the little boy? It was love. He loved his mother and anything that he did for her was easy.

A little drop of oil will always make a machine run more easily, and a little love will make everything go better.

There are some children who hate arithmetic. It is so hard, and they have so much trouble with it. And there are other children who love it, and always find it easy. It is not hard because they have learned to love it. If there is some lesson that is very hard for you, learn to love it and it will not be long before you will find it easy.

There are some people whom we find it very hard to get along with. They are like that old barn door we were talking about. The more we do for them the worse they are. The trouble is they need a little love. Love them a little and show them that you love them, and you will be surprised to see how much easier it will be to get along with them.

An automobile stopped on our street the other day, and they could not make it go. The engine was all right, but something had been forgotten. They had put in no cylinder oil.

Sometimes there is trouble in the house, or in school, or out on the playground, and when we come to look we find we have forgotten to put the love in, and things won't run very long without love, any more than a car will run without oil.

Some one was telling of a young woman in Canada. She lived in a beautiful home and had everything that her heart could wish for. She decided that she wanted to be a missionary, and went out to China. After a few years one of her friends went to see her. She was living in a poor little native house, and her clothes were old and shabby. She worked very hard every day and had contracted a disease that made her suffer much of the time. But she was very happy. Her friend said to her, "I don't see how you can stand these awful people, and this awful place and this life you are living." The missionary said, "It does not seem hard to me because I love them."

When things are hard, don't forget to look and see if you do not need a little love.

XIX

God's Care

"He careth for you."—1 PETER v. 7.

ONE of the most beautiful and wonderful things about God is His care. He cares for and loves everything that He has made.

The lilies are very lovely and very fragrant. Jesus once said that God clothes them with their beauty and loves them every one. And the little birds, it does not seem to us as if God would have time to think of them, but Jesus said that not one of them falls to the ground that God doesn't know about it. God cares for the little birds. When boys are tempted to be cruel to them, they ought never to forget that God knows and cares for the sparrows.

Now, if God cares for the flowers and the birds, we may be very sure that He cares a great deal more for us.

A few years ago the census taker came to your house and took the names of everyone in it. Everyone in the country was counted. No one, however small, was left out, and no one, not even the President, counted for more than one. We all have our names put

down in the government books in Washington. So in God's great book is the name of every one of us. God cares for all, just as much for the littlest child here this morning as He does for the richest man in the United States.

God cares when we are hungry and thirsty. Long ago there was a poor mother out in the desert with her little son. The water-bottle was empty, and the little boy was crying with thirst, and there was no spring or well nearby where they could get water. The poor mother thought that no one cared for her and that they would have to die of thirst. But God cared. He cares for and loves every little child who is suffering. He sent an angel and showed Hagar where she could find water for her little son to drink.

God cares for us when we are thirsty and hungry, and He cares for us when we are tired. In one of the Psalms we read, "He giveth His beloved sleep." When we are tired and cannot go a step further and everything goes wrong, then the Lord sends us sleep and when we wake up everything is all right again.

And God cares for us too when we are in danger. I once read of a king who had a son who was going on a long journey. There were a great many robbers along the way

he was to take, and his father was afraid that something might happen to him. So he called one of his bravest soldiers, and told him to follow along behind the young man, and to keep in the shadow so that he would not know that he was being followed, but to be ready if any evil should come near him.

That is what God does for His children. They used to say that God sends an angel to guard and to watch every little child and to protect him from harm. He cares for and watches over every one of us.

And God wants us to come to Him when we are in distress or trouble of any kind. He cares for us and He wants us to care for Him.

Once there was a big hawk chasing a little swallow. He almost caught it too, but there was a window open nearby, and the little bird flew into the window right into the arms of a man who was sitting at his desk. He kept the little bird safe and the hawk flew away.

Afterward that man wrote a hymn that we all know and love, a hymn that was suggested to him by the little bird that flew to him for safety:

Jesus, Lover of my soul,
Let me to Thy bosom fly,
While the nearer waters roll,
While the tempest still is high.

XX

The Giant Ferryman

"Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these, my brethren, ye have done it unto me."—MATT. xxv. 40.

LONG ago in the land of Syria, according to the legend, there lived a man named Christopher. He was very tall and muscular; in fact he was the strongest man anywhere. He vowed that he would only serve the mightiest being in the whole world. So he spent his life seeking the strongest master. For a while he was in the service of a king, who was very powerful. But after a little he discovered that this king was dreadfully afraid of the devil. So he left the king and went to serve the devil. One day as he and Satan were walking along the road together they came to a cross. When Satan saw it he began to tremble. Christopher concluded that Jesus must be stronger than Satan, so he decided that he would serve Jesus. But where was Jesus to be found? For a long time he looked for Him in vain. Then he met a hermit who told him about Jesus and he became a Christian. There was a swift, deep river not very far from

there, and the hermit advised him he could serve Jesus by carrying people across that river on his back. He told him that whenever he did a kindness for one who was poor and weak that Jesus would love him, and that some day He would come and speak to him.

So Christopher built a house by the side of the river and gave all his time and strength to carrying people over the stream. The river was so swift that it would have swept away another man, but Christopher was very strong and went over easily. It was a great sight to see him carrying, sometimes old men, sometimes children, sometimes weak women over the river and putting them gently down on the other side.

After a good many years had passed and Jesus had never once come, one evening Christopher was sitting in his house. It was very late and there was a great storm outside. He was sure that no one would want to go over the river that night, and he was getting ready to go to bed, when he heard a voice calling "Christopher." He thought at first that it was the wind, but he heard it again, and then the third time. So he opened the door and looked out. It was as dark as could be, and before long he saw a little child standing there, and begging to be taken over the river.

Without saying a word big Christopher put the little fellow on his shoulder and waded out into the river. At first the weight of the child was very light, but it became more heavy each step, until by the time he had reached the middle of the stream it was almost more than he could stand up under. But at last they reached the other side. Christopher set the little boy down on the bank and asked him who he was. He answered, "I am Jesus, and in carrying me, you have been carrying the sins of the whole world. You are a good and faithful servant. Go on serving me here as you have been doing and some day you will be with me in heaven."

So Christopher found Jesus at last. To the end of his days he helped Jesus by carrying people over that steep, swift river. When he died people called him "St. Christopher," which means "Christ-bearer."

Christopher served Jesus by bearing other people's troubles and burdens. We can all serve him in the same way. At one of our busy cross-streets one day there was an old woman with a heavy basket waiting for a chance to cross the street. There was a great amount of heavy traffic that day and she was afraid to start with her load. All at once there came a boy and lifted her bas-

ket and helped her over. She was so thankful. He had carried her burden for her.

Not far from here there is a poor woman who has been lying in bed for many years. She is very lonely and the days are very long. There are some young girls who go every week and read to her. They are helping bear her burden.

There are burdens for all of us to bear, and we can see Jesus as Christopher did if we will give our lives to bearing them.

XXI

The Tide

"As the sea causeth his waves to come up."
—EZEKIEL xxvi. 3.

THERE are many interesting things in the world about us. One of the most wonderful of all is the tide. Sometimes when you walk across the Yarmouth Street bridge all you can see below the bridge is a river of black mud, and you say that the tide is out. The next time you cross it perhaps it is full of water and you say the tide is in. What is it that makes the tides rise and fall like that? What is it that lifts all those millions and millions of tons of water all over the world twice every day? It is the moon. Perhaps at home you have a horse-shoe magnet. You know that if you hold that magnet near a little piece of steel, it will be drawn toward the magnet. The moon in the same way attracts the earth, and this is what causes the tides to rise.

Once I heard a man say, "I never stand on the seashore and hear the roar of the waves, and see the tide coming and going that I do not think of God."

Let us see what it is about the tide that makes people think of God.

For one thing the tide reminds us of the love of God. Sometimes, when you go walking on the beach after a storm, it is covered with sea weed, and wreckage, and filth of all sorts. Then the tide comes up, and when it has gone down the beach is as clean and white as a floor. That is what God's love does.

When our hearts and lives are filled with sin and mistakes the love of God, like a great tide, sweeps in and washes it clean again.

Then the tide reminds us of God's anger, too. Near where I used to live there was a sand bar that was bare when the tide was low, but was covered when the tide was high. There were two boys, who were fond of playing on the shore. They had been told by their father that they were never to go out to that sand bar. The tide might rise and catch them. One day they saw that no one was looking, so they went out to the bar. There were a great many interesting things out there, and they forgot all about the tide. All at once they looked and saw that the sea had risen and cut them off from the shore. There was no way to get back. It was too far for them to swim, and if someone had not seen and come for them, they would have

been drowned. When we do wrong God's anger and punishment come very quickly, just as the tide came up and caught these boys who had disobeyed their father.

Then the tide reminds us of the power of God. Long ago the Danes came over and conquered England. It seems strange to think of the Danes mastering England, but they did it many years ago. One of them became king of England. His name was Canute and he was a very wise and very good king. His servants who loved him very much, thought that there was nothing that King Canute could not do. They flattered him, and boasted so much about him that he determined to teach them a lesson. He ordered them to carry his throne down to the seashore at low tide. By and by the tide began to rise. It came nearer and nearer. King Canute ordered it to go back. But the more he commanded the faster the water came on, till it wet their feet and they all had to run up to higher ground. Then the king said to his servants, "Remember, there is only One who is all-powerful and that is the God whom the sea obeys."

He made the waves obey Him, and He can keep you when you are in trouble. Never forget that.

XXII

The Stone Face

"We shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is."
1 John iii. 2.

Did you ever hear the story of "The Great Stone Face?" In one of the states of New England there is a lovely valley, full of villages and farms. At the head of the valley there is a gigantic pile of rocks, and as you look at them from the distance they are exactly like a human face. There are dark eyes, and a high forehead, and a smiling mouth. It is altogether a very fine, beautiful face. There was a legend connected with this valley, which has come down from the days of the Indians of long ago. The legend promised that some day a man would come to that valley, who would be the greatest and the best man of his time, and they would know him, because his face would be exactly like that of the stone face.

For many years the people watched for some one to come who looked like the face in the rocks. There were many who came who they thought l oked like the image. There was a very rich man whose face they heard was something like it, but when they

looked closely they found that his was a very selfish face. Then there came a great soldier. He was something like it, too, but his features were too hard. And there was a statesman. For a long while they thought that perhaps he might be the one, but he too had something in his face that was evil.

One day a little child was born in the valley. When he could walk his mother took him out and showed him the great stone face away off there at the head of the valley. As the boy grew older he liked to go and watch it. He became a man after a while and built a little cottage, where he could sit in the evening after the work was done and see the stone face. He was a very good man, gentle and unselfish and thoughtful of others, and every one loved him. Years passed by, and he was an old man. One day there came to the valley a stranger. He had heard about the stone face and wanted to see it. He stopped at the cottage of the old man and they went out together to look at it. The stranger gazed at the stone face, and then at the face of the old man, and he saw that they were exactly alike. At last the legend had been fulfilled, and a man had lived with a face like that of the stone face, and he was the best man of his time. He had looked at the stone face so often and so long that he had become like it.

This makes us understand what our text means. Those who think about Jesus, and read about Him, and love Him, will by and by come to be like Him.

We become like the things that we think about and see oftenest. I once heard of a boy who ran away and went to sea. His mother couldn't understand why he had gone. She had never talked about the sea. She did not know that he had ever read a book about it. The day after he had left she went into his room, and there she saw something that made her know why he had gone. There was a picture of a ship hanging before his bed. It had been there ever since he was a little boy. It was the first thing that he saw every morning, and the last thing that he looked at before he went to sleep at night. He had thought about that ship, and dreamed about the sea, till he had gone to be a sailor.

This is one reason why we ought to be so careful about our companions, and the books that we read, and the things that we look at and think about. We grow by and by to be like them.

The best thing for any of us to strive for is to be like Jesus, and to be like Him we must think of Him, and love and obey Him.

XXIII

Digging For Treasure

"If thou seekest her as silver, and searchest for her as for hid treasure."—PROVERBS ii. 4.

THERE are thousands of men who make their living digging for treasure. They go down, sometimes for thousands of feet, into the mines to get the gold and silver and copper that is hidden there. God has stored away many rich and wonderful things in this earth of ours but we must work very hard to get them.

In this verse Solomon tells us about a kind of riches that we have to dig for. It is not gold, or silver, or copper. It is wisdom. Solomon knew much about wisdom and we ought to listen carefully to everything that he has to say.

First, what is wisdom? One boy says, "Wisdom is learning. I go to school to get wisdom." Yes, that is true, but that is not all there is in wisdom. A girl says to me, "Wisdom is doing what is right and not doing what is wrong." Yes, that is wisdom. Solomon himself gives us a fine definition which everyone of us should remember, "The fear of the Lord, that is wisdom"

He tells us that wisdom is a treasure. It is the greatest treasure that any one can pos-

sess. Once I heard a father say, "I could leave my boy a few thousand dollars. But I am not going to do that. I am going to give him a good education. That is something that no one can ever take from him." That father was right. A good education is better than all the money he could leave him. It is the best sort of richés.

And he tells us that wisdom is a hid-treasure. This means that it is hard to get. We have to work for it long and hard before it is ours, as the miner has to dig, and labor before he finds the silver or gold that he is seeking.

Have you heard the story of Theseus, the son of the king of Athens? Theseus lived with his mother in the country, while his father lived at court away off in Athens. Theseus' mother used to tell him about his brave father and the little boy would say, "Why cannot I go and see my father in Athens?" His mother took him out to a great rock and told him that when he was able to lift that rock that he could go and see his father. Little boys think they are very strong, and Theseus took hold of the rock and tried to move it. Of course it did not budge, and then his mother told him that it would be many long years before he could ever hope to lift it.

But almost every day the little fellow

would go there where the rock was, and put his hands under it and try. Years passed and he became a sturdy boy. He asked his mother if she did not think it was now about time for him to go to Athens. "No," she said, "Not till you have lifted the stone, and you are not strong enough yet." He went and tried, and thought he saw the ground begin to crack a little around the stone. But he wasn't really moving it. So for a little he did not try any more. He worked hard and did his duty till he was a young man. Then he came to his mother and asked her if he could go to Athens. She answered, "Yes, I will consent if you will lift the stone." He put his hands under it, and struggled with all his might, and slowly the earth began to break and the stone came up. He had lifted it at last. His mother said, "Look under the stone." He looked, and there was a casket and in the casket was his father's sword. When he was a baby his father had put the sword there, and covered it with that great rock, and promised when his boy was strong enough to lift the rock he could have the sword, and come to rule with him in Athens.

So try to remember that our Father in heaven has many precious things hidden away for us if we will work and persevere till we win them.

XXIV

Messengers

"I have set thee to be a light of the Gentiles."
ACTS xiii. 47.

THERE is no reading better for children than good missionary books. Many of the missionaries are heroes and heroines of the finest kind, and the stories of their lives are very exciting. One of the best is the Life of John G. Paton, the missionary to the New Hebrides. When Dr. Paton went to the New Hebrides the natives were savage cannibals, and he tells us many thrilling things about his life among them. One is the story of the well that he dug. In the island of Aniwa where Dr. Paton lived there was no spring or well. The only fresh water the people had came from the rain. They had a rainy season that lasted from December to April, when there was more water than they needed. The rest of the year there was no rain and very little water to drink. Sometimes the only fresh water anywhere was the juice of the cocoanuts that grew on the trees on the island. So very often there was suffering and death because they had no water.

Dr. Paton determined that he would try to dig a well. Aniwa was a coral island and he did not know whether there was fresh water underneath the ground or not, but he made up his mind that he would find out. So he started to work. The natives saw him digging the hole and they asked him what he was doing. He said he was trying to find water. They said to him, "Water no come from the earth. It come from the sky." He told them that in his country they got water out of the ground. They couldn't believe it. They thought that Missi, as they called Dr. Paton, had gone crazy, that the heat had affected his mind and he did not know what he was doing. So they watched him with great sorrow, for they loved him and were so sorry that he was crazy. There was not one of them who would help him. He had to go down into the hole and fill his bucket, and then climb out and pull it up and empty it. They would not even haul up the dirt for him. At last after weeks of hard work he got down about thirty feet. The ground began to be moist and he knew that he was near water. But it was about the sea level and he was afraid that it would be salt water, and all his work would be for nothing. He went home that night and prayed so hard that the water would be fresh. The next day he

called the chiefs and told them that before the day was over he would give them a drink of fresh water out of the hole. "Poor old Missi," they said to themselves, "he is more crazy than ever."

Dr. Paton went down into the well and started to dig again. After a little the water came rushing into the bottom. He fell on his knees and tasted it and it was fresh. He stayed there on his knees and thanked God and then called the people and gave them all a drink. Now they knew that Missi was not crazy and they were so glad for they loved him. That is the way they came to have fresh water all the year around on Aniwa, and if you ever visit that little island, you will see there the well that Dr. Paton dug.

Dr. Paton was a missionary, and the word "missionary" means messenger. A messenger is one who is sent on an errand. God has made us all, boys and girls, His messengers. He wants us in school, and at home, and wherever we are, to make people know about Him. We do not have to go away off to some heathen land to be missionaries. That is the finest and noblest way to be a missionary. But we can be His messengers here. We can give part of our money to missions, and we can bring others to church and Sunday school, and we can

always, when we say our prayers, ask God to save the boys and girls who have never heard about Him.

A messenger must never forget his message. Once I went into a business man's office and there was a new boy there. I said, "Where is your other boy?" "O," he said, "I had to let him go. He was too trifling. If I sent him out with a message, sometimes he would tuck it into his pocket and forget about it, and spend half the afternoon playing marbles."

God has given us a message to deliver. Let us be sure that we do not tuck it away and forget about it.

XXV

What It Costs to Be Stingy

"There is that maketh himself rich, yet hath nothing."
PROVERBS xiii. 7.

THERE are some people who are not generous because it costs too much. You have an apple, and there is some other boy who is looking at that apple. He would like to have some of it. And you would like to be generous, but if you gave him half of it you would only have half left for yourself. So maybe you say to yourself, "It costs too much to be generous. I will keep it all for myself."

Some people would be willing to help others and do good, but when they think of what they would have to give up to do it, they decide that it costs too much.

But, while it costs something to be generous, it costs far more to be stingy and selfish. Let us think what it costs a boy or girl, or man or woman, to be selfish.

First it costs our love and sympathy. One of the most precious things that you have is your loving, sympathetic heart. Once we had a Summer when there was very little

rain. There was no water for the trees and plants. That Fall, when we went to gather the nuts they looked all right, but when we cracked one of them, the kernel inside was worthless. The drought had dried it up. It is unselfishness that waters the heart. When a person becomes selfish, his love and sympathy dry up like the kernel of that nut. That is the first thing that we lose when we are stingy. We lose our sympathy.

Then, second, we lose our happiness. Did you ever know a stingy person who was happy? Did you ever see a generous, thoughtful boy or girl who was not happy? No! you never have, and I can tell you the reason. Stinginess always brings unhappiness.

Charles Dickens tells us the story of Mr. Scrooge. He was very stingy and very mean. He never did anything for anyone else if he could help it, and never gave away anything. He had gone on in this way till there was very little good in him, and you know when a person hasn't any good in himself, he never can see much good in others. He believed that everyone else was a humbug. Whenever he heard of someone doing a kind deed, he said, "humbug." And his stinginess had made him very unhappy. He was very rich, but with all his money he was

the saddest old man in London, for stinginess never brings happiness.

The night before Christmas Old Scrooge had some dreams. He dreamed of what Christmas was long ago, when he was a little boy, and was happy, before he had become so stingy Then he dreamed of what Christmas was then, and of what it would be by and by, if he kept on getting more selfish and unhappy every day. At last he woke up. That very day he started out to be kind and thoughtful and generous to others, and he had the first happiness he had known for years. This is the second thing that stinginess takes away from us. It takes our happiness.

Remember, too, that the people who are selfish and stingy never get the good of what they have. Not very far from Bingen, on the Rhine, in Germany, there is a castle that they call "The Mouse Tower." There is a story of that tower that has come down to us from long ago. There was a great famine in Germany and the people were starving to death. In this castle lived a selfish, mean old bishop. He had great stores of grain in the castle but he would not give any of it to the starving people. They came and begged him to sell them some, but he kept it all for himself.

They tried to break into his granaries, and

some of them did get in, and when they were once inside the cruel old bishop had them all killed. God had to punish him for his selfishness and cruelty, and this is the way He did it. He sent thousands and thousands of mice down the river to the island where the bishop's castle stood. The mice swam the moat, and climbed the walls, and ate the grain, and when they had finished the grain they ate the bishop, and that was the end of his selfishness. Selfishness always has a bad ending, so it is better to learn to be unselfish and generous.

XXVI

A Tattle-Tale

"Thou shalt not go up and down as a talebearer."
—LEVITICUS xix. 16.

JESUS is the only Man who ever lived a perfect life. The best of people have had their faults. Joseph, whose story we like to read so much in the Old Testament, had a serious weakness. He was a tattle-tale. If he saw his brothers doing something, that he thought they ought not to do, off he would run to his father and tell it. This did no good, and it made his brothers very angry. At last they could stand it no longer, and said to one another, "We will have to do something to this little tattle-tale brother of ours or there will never be any peace in the family." So they sent him off into the land of Egypt. They did very wrong to do this, and the time came when they were very sorry, but Joseph ought not to have been so ready to tell tales about others.

Nobody likes a talebearer. Solomon once said, "The words of a talebearer are as wounds." That is, the words of a tattle-tale

always hurt some one. There are some people who like nothing quite so much as to find out something bad about some one else and then go and tell it to every one they see.

There are three reasons why we ought not to tell tales about others. First, because it will hurt ourselves. There was once a little girl who came running in to her mother and said, "Mother, I want to tell you something awful that Mary told me about Catherine." Her mother said, "Now before you tell me there are three questions that I would like to ask you. Do you know that this story is true?" The little girl answered, "No, I don't know that it is true. Mary says that it is." "The second question," said her mother, "is this. Do you think that it is kind to tell something that you are not sure is true?" The little girl said, "No, it isn't." "And the third question is, would you like to have someone say such a thing about you?"

That little girl didn't tell her story and she never told it to anyone after that.

When people tell stories about others that they have heard it is not long before others begin to tell stories about them.

The second reason why we ought not to tell tales about others is because it hurts everyone we tell, as well as the person we are talking about. The boy or girl who tells stories about others is like a child going

around with the measles or the scarlet fever, giving it to everyone he meets. If you take a disease like that, the doctor comes and looks at you, and then he orders you to stay away from other people, and puts a card on your house, so that no one else will come near you. If you have scarlet fever a red card is put on the house, and if you have measles it is white, and blue for diphtheria. It would be a good thing if the doctors, when they find a child who goes around telling bad tales about others, would shut him in his house and put a big black card on it, so no one could come and see him till he gets over it.

There is another reason why we ought not to tell tales. God doesn't like it. God said long ago, "Thou shalt not go up and down as a talebearer." He meant that for us as much as for the people who lived in the time of Moses.

God knows many bad stories about everyone of us. We are all hoping that he will forgive us and forget them. But He is not going to forgive and forget unless we are willing to forgive and forget the bad things that we hear about others.

XXVII

"I Forgot"

"Son, remember."—LUKE xvi. 25.

WHEN Joseph was a very young man he was shut up in prison for a crime which he had not committed. After he had been there for a while he did a great favor for one of the other prisoners, so that this man was released and went away a free man.

Before he left the prison Joseph made him promise that he would speak to the king about him and have him released. But the man forgot all about his promise and poor Joseph had to stay in the prison two years more. All he could say was "I forgot."

A man pulled some letters out of his pocket one day and said, "There, my wife gave me those letters to mail a week ago and here they are. I forgot."

How often we hear children say when they have done wrong, "I forgot." Once I knew a boy whose father had told him never to leave the gate open. The boy promised to remember, but he forgot and left it open, and some cattle came and destroyed everything in his father's fine garden. Do you

believe that his father excused him because he said, "I forgot"? No, indeed. He ought to have remembered. God has given us our memories that we may remember the things that are told us, and if we do not use them, and forget everything He has told us, we cannot expect Him to excuse us.

We ought none of us ever to forget our fathers and mothers, and the good and wise things that they teach us. Did you ever hear the story of Theseus and the Minotaur? Theseus was the son of the king of Athens. On the Island of Crete was a horrible monster called the Minotaur. Every year he carried off and destroyed a number of the finest young men and women in Athens. Nobody knew who was to be next and everybody was dreadfully afraid of him. Theseus was very brave, and asked his father if he could go to the Island of Crete and try to kill the monster. The king did not want him to go. He was afraid that Theseus might be killed and then he would have no son to be king after him. But Theseus begged so hard that he let him go. But there was one promise he had to make. The ship on which he was to go had black sails. The king made Theseus promise that if he killed the Minotaur that he was to change the sails to white when he came back. If he was killed the ship was to come with the

same black sails. So Theseus sailed away, He went to Crete and had a terrible fight with the Minotaur and at last he killed him. Then he went on board the ship to go home. But he was so full of happiness that he forgot all about his promise to his father. He left the old black sails up, instead of changing them to white as he had promised. Away there in Greece the king was watching the sea for a sail. All at once he saw a ship coming. The sails were black. He thought his son had been killed, and he was so grieved that he fell over into the sea and was drowned. When Theseus reached the shore he found that he had killed his father by his forgetfulness.

There are boys and girls who are wounding and grieving their fathers and mothers every day by forgetting the promises that they have made and the wise things that have been taught them.

When Paul wrote to Timothy he said, "Remember Jesus Christ." Paul knew that Timothy would be tempted to say many things that were wrong and to do many things that he ought not, and so he told him to remember Jesus Christ. When we remember Him we can't say bad words and do wrong things.

XXVIII

The Rainbow

"I will set my bow in the cloud, and it shall be for a token of the covenant between me and the earth."—GENESIS ix. 13.

EVERY little child likes to go out after a shower and look for the rainbow. The Greeks and Romans who lived long ago called the rainbow "Iris," and worshipped it. They thought that "Iris" was the messenger of God to the earth.

The Jews too had a pretty story of the rainbow. They used to tell the children that it was a band that connected earth and heaven, and when they saw it they would know that heaven was not very far away.

What is the rainbow, and what does it mean? Our text tells us that it is "a token of a covenant." That means that it is put there to remind us of a promise.

Once there was a man who went down the street with a little piece of ribbon in his button-hole. One of his friends met him and said, "What is that ribbon there for?" "O," said he, "when I left home this morning I promised my wife that I would get some-

thing for her. She was so afraid that I would forget that she put that ribbon there to remind me of it." That little piece of ribbon was "the token of a covenant." It was to remind him of his promise.

So God put that beautiful ribbon that we call the rainbow in the sky to remind Him of His promise to us. Let us see what it means and what God has promised through the rainbow.

First, it is the promise of God's mercy. Nearly five thousand years ago the world had become so wicked that God sent a great flood and destroyed every living thing on the whole earth, except Noah and his family, and the birds and animals that went with them into the ark.

When it was all over the people were afraid that another awful flood might come and destroy them too, so God promised them that there would never be another like that. And to show them that He would never forget His promise He put the lovely, many-colored rainbow in the sky.

If you will look sharp some Summer afternoon, when the storm has passed and the sun has come out again, and shines on the raindrops falling from the trees, you will see the rainbow reaching across the sky.

There was a boy once who ran away from home. He had been a very bad boy, but his

mother loved him. She always hoped and prayed that he would come back. She lived in a little cottage by the sea, and every night she took a lamp and put it in the window so that the light could be seen out over the waves. She did it, she said, to show her boy if he ever came back, that she had forgiven him and was waiting for him.

Did you ever look down Brooke Avenue at night and see those two lights, one red and the other green, in front of the Naval Y. M. C. A? They are there to tell the sailors who come ashore that no matter how far they have been away, there is a welcome and a home for them there.

God put the rainbow in the clouds to show us that there is always welcome and mercy and love for us when we have sinned, if we will come home to Him.

Then the rainbow reminds us that in everything that God does there is the same loving care for us. There are seven colors in the rainbow. Count them the next time you see one. They are red, orange, yellow, green, violet, indigo and blue. Those lovely colors are there in the sky all the time, but it takes the rain to bring them out so that we can see them.

Children do not like to have it rain. They want to have fun and play. That rainbow reminds us that the things we do not like

often bring us the finest blessings that we have. We do not like the rain, but it is the rain that makes the flowers grow, and the grain, and the fruit, and fills the city reservoir so that we have water to drink.

We do not like to be sick, but it is when we are sick that we learn how much our fathers and mothers and brothers and sisters love us.

It takes the rain to bring out the rainbow, and it takes trouble sometimes to make us know how much God loves and cares for us.

When you see the rainbow remember that it means the promise of God's mercy and God's love.

XXIX

God's Love For the Birds and Animals

"Every beast of the forest is mine, and the cattle upon a thousand hills. I know all the fowls of the mountains, and the wild beasts of the field are mine."
—PSALM l. 10-11.

LONG ago, when Adam and Eve lived in the Garden of Eden, they were not afraid of the animals, and the animals were not afraid of them. The tigers were as gentle and harmless as kittens; and lions ate out of Adam's hand, and the great buffaloes were as tame as cows. But one day Adam and Eve sinned. They began to dislike God and to be afraid of Him. And when they fell out with God they began also to hate and fear the animals, and the animals began to hate and fear them. That is always true. The man who does not love God is cruel and unkind to the birds and animals.

From that day, man, instead of being the best friend the animals have, has become their worst enemy. I remember hearing my father telling of the millions of wild pigeons that used to fly north every year. Now

there is not one left. They have all been killed by the hunters. The largest and finest bird that ever lived in the northern hemisphere was the great auk. Hundreds of years ago there were vast flocks of these birds. But the last one was killed and there will never be any more.

Once there were fine herds of hundreds of thousands of buffaloes roaming over our western plains. In one of our national parks there are a few left. All the rest have been slaughtered. When I was a small boy nearly every woman had a seal-skin coat, but the pretty little seals have almost all been killed and very soon there will be no more. It must make God very angry when He sees how men have destroyed the beautiful things that He has made. God made all the animals and the birds and He loves every one of them. Jesus said, "Are not two sparrows sold for a farthing, and not one of them falleth to the ground without your Father." Sparrows were so cheap in the time of Jesus that you could buy eight of them for a penny, but Jesus says that God knows and cares for every one of them.

Two small boys one day were shooting with an air rifle at a small sparrow on a tree. They shot many times, but could not hit it. At last one of them said, "I think God must be taking care of that sparrow."

Yes, he was right. God cares for the sparrows and when we are cruel to them He knows and remembers.

Then, we should be kind to the birds and animals because they are so ready and willing to love us if we will let them.

There was a prominent business man living in the suburbs of one of our great cities a few years ago. He used to ride out to his home on the train every evening. He had a fine, big, setter dog that loved him very much. Every evening, from the big house on the hill, the dog would hear the whistle of the train, and run down to the station to meet his master. One day the man died. The poor dog could not understand that his master was gone, and every evening he would go down to the train as he had always done. When no one came he would trot off home, lonely and sad. After a while he would not eat and became very weak, but every night the faithful animal dragged himself down to meet that train. After a few weeks he was found dead. He had died of a broken heart. When dumb creatures can be so faithful and true to us, we ought to be kind and gentle with them.

Some one tells of seeing a little boy pulling a beetle apart. He was only a thoughtless little boy. He did not know that he was making the poor beetle suffer. His

mother was sitting there and saw it all. She ought to have told him not to make anything suffer, but she did not say a word. Some years after, the same man was visiting in this home again. The mother said to him, "I don't know what is the matter with my boy. He is so cruel. He does not seem to care how much pain he gives me." That little boy began by being cruel to the beetle, and before long he was cruel to his mother. The boy or girl who is unkind to the birds and animals will by and by be unkind to every one.

The only way to be kind and gentle is to try to love everything, even the smallest things that God has made.

XXX

Killed with Kindness

"So the bands of Syria came no more into the land of Israel."—2 KINGS vi. 23.

WE sometimes hear of people who were "killed with kindness." This does not mean that they were really killed. It only means that their hate and anger were killed. Perhaps you know someone who is so hateful and unkind and disagreeable that every one has a hard time to get along with him. All at once some one says, "Let's kill him with kindness." Then they all begin doing kind things for him till he is ashamed and sorry; his anger and hate pass away, and he becomes kind, too.

Long ago in the land of Israel something like this happened. The Syrians had been fighting the Israelites, carrying off their boys and girls into slavery, burning their homes, and doing everything that they could to make them unhappy. One day a band of these Syrians came into the land, and the prophet Elisha prayed to the Lord, and they were all made blind, so that they did not know which way to turn. Then the prophet

led these blind Syrians into the very city where the king of Israel lived. When the king saw them he was very glad. He said, "Now, I will have my revenge on these men who have made me so much trouble. I will kill every one of them." But the prophet said, "No, you won't. You are going to give them a good dinner, and each one a new pair of shoes, and treat them to the very best of everything that you have. And when you have done that you are going to let them go back home safely, every one of them."

The king did not want to do it at first. It seemed like a very strange way to treat one's enemies. But he did it. He let the men go home safely, after doing everything he could for their comfort. They went home and told the king of Syria how kind the king of Israel had been to them, and what royal good fellows those Israelites were, and the king of Syria decided that the war should stop. It had been killed by kindness.

Over three hundred years ago, in 1588, a great Spanish fleet, called the Armada, started from Spain to conquer England. They were not only going to master England and Scotland; they were also hoping to destroy the Protestant religion and burn all the heretics. When they reached the North Sea there was a great storm and many of the fine ships were wrecked.

Early one morning there was a minister in his study in a little village on the coast of Scotland. All at once the door opened and the village constable came in. He told the minister, whose name was James Melville, that the night before a ship had been cast ashore near the village and two hundred and fifty Spaniards had been captured. He asked the minister what to do with them. "There is only one thing to do with them," said James Melville. "We will show them what good Christians there are in Scotland." So they went and invited them to the church and made a feast for them and took care of them till they returned to Spain. We are told that when the admiral in command of that fleet reached home he went to see the king and begged him to have no more wars with the English and Scotch, who had been so kind to them. They had been killed with kindness.

One of the best ways to master and overthrow an enemy is to disarm him. If you can take away his weapon you can do what you want with him. The easiest and surest way to take away the weapon of someone who is disagreeable and unkind is to be kind to him. This is what we mean by "killed with kindness." It is the only kind of killing that is not forbidden in the sixth commandment.

XXXI

Looking Where We Are Going

"Walk circumspectly."—EPHESIANS v. 15.

A BOY was sitting on the porch with his foot done up in bandages. Some one came by and asked him what was the matter. He said that he had stepped on a broken bottle and cut his foot. Just then his mother spoke up and said, "That is the great trouble with Tommy. He never looks where he is going."

There are many boys and girls like Tommy. They do not look where they are going, and the first thing they know they are in trouble. We have a little text to-day that ought to interest such boys and girls. It is very short. "Walk circumspectly." That sounds very hard, but it isn't. It means: "Look where you are going."

Sometimes when you are starting out somewhere you hear your mother say to you, "Now mind and look where you are going." A long, long time ago Paul, the great apostle, told the Christians that they were to look where they were going. That is very good advice for us, as well as for them.

We must look where we are going at school. A man was talking about his boy. He said, "I want him to go through grammar school and high school. But he does not like to study. He wants to stop and go to work and I may have to let him, for he will not study.

A few years from now that boy will be looking for a better place and will not be able to get it because he does not know enough. If he will look ahead and see where the road he is traveling is leading him, he will be careful to take his father's advice.

Then we ought every one of us to look where we are going in the formation of our characters. It is very easy when we are children to form habits that we will never be able to break all our lives.

A man one day was reading a book in a boat along the Niagara River. As he read the boat drifted loose and began to float down the river. He was busy with the book and did not notice it. All at once he looked up and saw that he was going fast toward the falls. He threw down the book and jumped for the oars. But the current was too swift. He could not stop the boat, and if help had not come he would have gone over the falls and lost his life. The trouble was that he did not look soon enough where he was going.

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It is so easy for us to get into habits of life that will by and by carry us to ruin. The only way to guard against this is to look where we are going. When we kneel down every day we ought to ask God to show us the way to go, and if it is not the right way to tell us where He would have us go.

There was once a man who was dying. He was an old man and was not a Christian. As the doctor came out of his room, he met old Sam, his colored servant, who had been with him for many years. He said, "Sam, do you know that your master is going on a long journey pretty soon?" Sam said, "No, sah, I ain't heard nothing of this. When Massa goes away he says to me, 'Sam, get my clothes out. Sam, pack my bag.' Old Massa ain't said nuthin to me. If he's goin, he ain't ready."

The old man was going to die and he wasn't ready. He had lived a long life and had never looked ahead to what comes when this life is over.

There is another life after this one. It is a great thing when we are young to look ahead and get everything ready for that other life. "Remember now thy Creator in the days of thy youth." "Look where you are going."

XXXII

Hopefulness

"Hope thou in God."—PSALM xlii. 11.

WE have often heard it said that the best time of life is the time when we are young. We are happy when we are young because we are hopeful. When we grow older some of us lose our hopefulness, and then our happiness is gone.

The Greeks had a beautiful story about how Hope came into the world. There was a princess named Pandora. She was engaged to a prince named Epimetheus. When she was married, among her wedding presents, was a little box from Jupiter, which she was to keep and never to open. That was a very queer kind of present. Suppose you were a bride and a box should be handed in by a messenger at the door, and you were asked never to open it. It would almost spoil the wedding, you would want to look into it so much.

That was the way Pandora thought about it. She loved all her other presents, but she did want to see what was in that little box that Jupiter had given her. One day she

was all alone in the house. The box was on the mantel-piece. She thought more and more about it. "Surely," she said to herself, "it will not hurt if I take one little peek." So she looked everywhere to be sure that no one was looking, then she took the box and opened it. The moment the lid was lifted, out flew thousands of little creatures, like a swarm of bees, and went off through the window. These little things that she let go when she opened the box were the troubles that torment people. That is the way trouble came into the world. While she was watching those little things fly away, her husband, Epimetheus, came into the room. He ran and closed the lid of the box just in time to prevent one little creature from getting away. That little thing's name was Hope. He stayed with them always.

The Greek mothers used to teach their children by that little story that when troubles are all around us, and everything else has left us that there is always Hope left.

There was a man walking with some companions through a lonely forest. Somehow he became separated from his friends, and lost his way. After wandering around in a circle for a little he sat down in despair. He had lost his friends, and his way, and did not know in which direction to go.

All at once his hand touched something in

his pocket. He took it out. It was a compass. There was a little needle there that pointed straight to the north. He took that compass and followed the needle, and he was soon out of the forest. When everything else was gone the compass pointed out the way.

There are times when everything goes wrong, when it seems as though we had lost everything, but there is One whom we always have, and that is God. That is what David meant when he said, "Hope thou in God."

It is a great thing to be hopeful. And if we obey and love God we will never be troubled with hopelessness. In the Boer War a little English army was besieged in one of the cities of South Africa. One of the soldiers was so hopeless that wherever he went he made the other soldiers hopeless, too, and they began to lose their courage.

At last the commander saw what was going on, so he had the man put in prison. It would not do in a time like that to have anyone around who had no hope.

XXXIII

Afraid of Lions

"The slothful man saith, There is a lion without. I shall be slain in the streets."—PROVERBS xxii. 13.

SOLOMON, I think, must have written this about a boy or a girl. Perhaps there was a little boy whose mother had told him to go to the spring and bring a pitcher of water for dinner. The little boy was playing and did not want to go. So he said, "O, mother, there is a big lion down there in the woods back of the spring, and I am afraid to go." There was no lion there. The little boy only wanted an excuse not to go and bring that pitcher of water.

It is strange what terrible things boys and girls can think of when they do not want to do something. Solomon calls these awful things that we think of lions. There are several kinds of lions. There are real lions. You have seen them in the circus, with their sleepy eyes and their great, shaggy manes. Then there are stone lions, such as you sometimes see on the steps of some big buildings; and there are play lions, that little children have in the nurs-

ery. But this is a different kind of lion. It is the Excuse Lion. When you offer an excuse to get out of doing something you ought to do, Solomon calls that a lion.

Some of you when Sunday comes wake up and try to think what day it is. Then you remember that it is Sunday, and almost at once you begin to feel an awful pain in your head, or your tooth, or your stomach. When your mother comes in you tell her you are so sick, you do not believe you can go to Sunday-school. If you have a sensible mother she will tell you to go along to Sunday-school, and you will feel better. And sure enough when you get home you are well. Now, you really did not have a pain at all. You wanted to stay home and play. It was one of those lions in the way.

There are always so many of these lions around on Sunday morning. That is the worst day for this kind of lions. There was a woman in my congregation a long time ago. She never came to church, so I went to see her about it. She told me that she had such dreadful sick-headaches, that she just couldn't come.

The next day I saw her son-in-law. I said, "It is too bad about those headaches." "Yes," he said, "They are very strange headaches. She never has them except on Sun-

day morning, and she is always perfectly well when church is over."

Grown people are troubled with these lions as well as the children. If it is a little cloudy on Sunday morning there are some people who would never think of venturing out to church. No, indeed, it might rain. And they might get wet. And then they might take cold. And then something dreadful might happen. They say they would like to go to church, but there is that awful lion in the way.

I sometimes think that the devil must keep a whole, big cageful of these lions and let them out Sunday mornings to scare people.

Then there are boys and girls who want to be Christians. They know that they ought to love Jesus, and live the kind of life he wants them to live. But they are afraid. There is a lion in the way. Let me tell you what that lion is. They are fearful that some of the other boys and girls might make fun of them, and they are afraid of a little ridicule.

The first thing that Samson did was to kill a lion. Do you remember that lion David killed? One of the first brave deeds of the Grecian Hercules was to slay a great lion, and one of the first things for boys and girls to do, if they are to be brave and true and strong, is to kill the Excuse Lion.

XXXIV

The Boy Who Thought That He Knew More Than His Father

"The younger son took his journey into a far country."
LUKE xv. 13.

ONCE some one asked Charles Dickens to name the greatest story in the world. "Dickens writes wonderful stories himself, so he ought to know what a great story is," thought the man who asked him. Mr. Dickens answered, "The greatest story that was ever written is Jesus' Parable of the Prodigal Son."

You have all read the story many times. It is about the boy who thought that he knew more than his father. This boy had a fine home, and plenty to eat, and kind friends, and a loving father. He had everything that was necessary to make a boy contented and happy. But he was not satisfied. He began to think it was too slow around there, and his father was too old-fashioned. He wanted to go out and see the world and have a good time. His father tried to keep him from going. He told him he would be sorry, that home was the best place for him.

But the boy thought that he knew more than his father, and so at last the father let him go.

For a long while the father didn't hear anything of him. Then one day he looked off down the road and he saw the son coming. He was all in rags, and hungry and footsore, a most pitiful looking object. He had learned that father knew more than he did after all.

There are so many boys and girls now like this young man. They think that they know more than their parents. Some of you boys have an idea that you could teach your father a great many things if he would only let you. You are wishing for the time to come when you can do as you please.

There are some of the girls, too, who, when their mothers correct them, turn up their noses and stamp their feet. They have the idea that their mothers do not know much, and that they know pretty much all there is to know.

It would have saved this young man, about whom Jesus spoke, plenty of trouble if he had listened to his father. It will spare you mistakes and regret if you will remember always that your parents know all you know and much more besides.

Suppose you had to travel through a lonely forest where there was no road. You

would not know which way to go. You would be afraid to strike out alone for fear of being lost. But all at once a guide comes to you and says, "I have been through the forest many times. I will lead you through. I know the way." But you say, "I don't want you to lead me. I know more about it than you do. I am going to go alone." So you refuse to go with the guide and start off by yourself, and before long you are lost, and in great distress and trouble. You would be very foolish to do that, wouldn't you? Now, that is what boys and girls are doing when they think that they know more than their parents.

Sometimes you make your parents very sad by not wanting to do what they wish you to do, and to be what they want you to be.

Have you ever read "The Little White Bird," that pretty story that J. M. Barrie wrote? If you have you remember Peter Pan, who had flown away from his home to play with the birds and fairies in Kensington Gardens. His mother did not want him to go, but he thought that he knew more than his mother. At home she was breaking her heart because he was gone. One night he flew back, and heard his mother speaking of him in her sleep, and he knew how much she wanted him to come back. But he didn't stay. He thought he would come

back some time later. But when he did it was too late. His mother's window was shut. She was dead. I am sorry for the boy who thinks he knows more than his father, and the girl who thinks she knows more than her mother. Some day they are going to be sadder and wiser.

XXXV

Good News

"As cold waters to a thirsty soul, so is good news from a far country."—PROVERBS XXV. 25.

No ONE ever likes to carry bad news. There was a man who had been informed that one of his friends had been killed on the railroad. He was asked to go and break the news to the wife and daughters of the man who had been killed. He said that he started and when he came to the house he just couldn't go in. He walked up and down in front a dozen times before he rang the bell. It is hard to tell bad news.

But we are always glad and happy when we can be the bearers of good news. Every boy and girl ought to know the story of the Battle of Marathon.

About twenty-five hundred years ago a great host of one hundred thousand Persians crossed over from Asia to Europe to conquer Greece. The Greeks had only a little army of ten thousand men, but they were very brave. They waited till everything was ready, and then they marched down out of the hills and attacked the Persians on the

plain of Marathon. The Persians had ten times as many soldiers, but the Greeks were fighting for their homes and their wives and children, and it made every man equal to ten. The Greeks won a great victory. After the battle they wanted to send the news of the victory to Athens. There were no telephones, or telegraphs, or automobiles, or even mails in those days. So a young soldier put off his armor and ran all the way from Marathon to Athens, across the hills and the valleys, for twenty miles with the good news. Ever since that time young men have been trying to see if they could run twenty miles as fast as he did. But there are very few o' them who can do it. It was the good news the young man carried that made his feet so swift.

Do you know what the word "Gospel," which we find so often in the New Testament, means? It means "good news." There is the gospel, that is, the good news, according to Matthew; then comes the gospel, the good news, according to Mark, and Luke, and John. Paul in his epistles had much to say to us about the "good news." What is this good news?

Once there was a boy who had done very wrong. His father had told him to go away. He did not want to have anything more to do with him. So the boy left home and for

many years he never saw his father. But the father grew old and one day became very sick. He began to want to see his boy again. So he sent a message to tell him that he was forgiven, and to come home again. What good news it must have been to that boy, the best news that he had ever heard.

That is what the gospel means. It is good news. We all do wrong. We sin every day that we live. People have always done wrong, and men thought that because of the wrong they had done that God hated them. Jesus came to bring the good news that God loves us. No matter how much we have sinned He loves us still, and wants us to come home and be with Him.

This is the good news that He wants us to tell everyone else. That young man who ran from Marathon to Athens ran very swiftly because he was the bearer of good news. We ought to go swiftly with the story of Jesus, because it is the best news the world ever heard.

XXXVI

Joseph

"Now Israel loved Joseph more than all his children; and he made him a coat of many colors."
—Genesis xxxvii. 3.

If I were to ask you all which of the children of the Old Testament you like best, I know that there are some of you would speak of David. And there are others who would tell me Samuel. But most of you, I am sure, would say that you like Joseph best of all. You all know the story of Joseph, so I am sure it is not necessary for me to tell you who he was, or where he lived, or how many brothers he had. If you do not know these things I hope that this afternoon you will read, or ask some one to read to you, all about Joseph, so that you will know before next Sunday.

Boys and girls all have faults. There is not one of us who is perfect. Joseph was not different from other boys in this. He had some very serious faults.

One of these was conceit. I am sorry to say that Joseph, who was such a good boy in many ways, was conceited. You remember poor little Cinderella, who lived with her

two step-sisters. They had all the pretty clothes, and the good things to eat, and the fine times, and sad little Cinderella had to sleep in the attic, and eat in the kitchen, and wear the old rags, that the others had cast off. She had a hard time of it till the fairy came and changed it all.

Well, it was something like this with Joseph and his brothers. Joseph's father loved him more than he did the rest, and all the nice things he gave him. A peddler came along one day with some beautiful cloth. Old Israel bought it and made a fine coat of it for Joseph, a coat like those that princes wore. His brothers had to wear the ugly skins of wild animals, and eat coarse food, and work hard, while Joseph had fine clothes and an easy time. All this made him conceited. He began to think that he was better than anyone else. He put on airs and began to strut around as though he owned the whole place.

Haven't you seen some little girls like that? When they get a new bonnet or dress, they think they are too high and mighty to speak to anyone who hasn't as grand things as they have.

Conceit always makes people unpopular, and it was not long before Joseph's brothers began to dislike him very much.

There was another bad thing about Jo-

seph. I am very sorry to have to say such a thing about a nice boy, but he was a tattle-tale. Whenever he heard anything about his brothers he ran and told his father. That was very unnecessary. It didn't do any good. It made his father sad and his brothers angry. There are some boys and girls that like to tell tales. They usually have a lonely time of it, for no one likes them. There are some grown people who never get over being tattle-tales. Whenever they hear something unkind and mean, they hurry and tell it to every one they know. There is a woman of that kind not very far from here. I heard a man say one day, "If she were to meet me on the street and ask me the time of the day, I wouldn't tell her unless I had a witness there. She is an old tattle-tale."

There was one more fault of Joseph's that I must tell you. He talked too much. You know when we lie down at night, we very often dream about the things we have been thinking about during the day. Joseph spent much of the day thinking how much better he was than his hard-working brothers, and then, when he went to sleep, he dreamed about it. He dreamed that they each had a sheaf. There were twelve of these sheaves. But his sheaf was the finest. It was the king-sheaf, and all the other

sheaves had to worship it. Now it was not wrong for Joseph to have that dream. We can't help what we dream, but he needn't have gone the next morning and told it to his brothers. He knew that it would make them angry. He talked too much. That is a fault that we ought many of us to overcome. Before you say anything, ask yourself the question, "Is what I am going to say likely to hurt the feelings of some one else? If it is, then I will leave it unsaid."

After all I have said this morning you may think that Joseph was a bad boy. But all boys have faults. He was, with all his faults, a very fine boy, and he grew to be a fine man. Next week I hope to tell you some of the fine things about Joseph.

XXXVII

Joseph

"So now it was not you that sent me hither, but God."
—GENESIS xlv. 8.

WHEN Joseph was young he was disagreeable and selfish, and we do not wonder that his brothers did not love him. But they ought not to have done what they did.

They were off with the sheep in another part of the country, and one morning old Jacob sent Joseph to see what his brothers were doing. When they saw him coming, with his coat of many colors, they were angry. No doubt they thought that he wanted to spy upon them, and then go back and tell some more tales to his father. So they decided they would make way with him. Some of them wanted to kill him. But instead of that they sold him as a slave to some Midianites who came along about that time, and were going down into Egypt. These Midianites took Joseph, and made him trudge along beside one of the camels all the way to Egypt, and there they sold him as a slave.

Then what do you think those bad brothers

of Joseph's did? They had taken off his pretty coat before they sold him. Now they took the coat and dipped it in blood, and when they went back to their father they told him they had found it along the road. Poor old Jacob believed that some lion or bear had killed Joseph, and mourned for him as though he were dead.

After Joseph reached Egypt we hear nothing but good about him. God sometimes sends trouble to us to bring out the good that is in us. If Joseph had stayed in the land of Canaan all his life, the pet of his father, he would very likely have amounted to nothing. He would have been selfish and conceited all his days. But the trouble that came to him made a good man of him.

There are several fine things about Joseph in Egypt. He resisted temptation. He knew when to say, "No." When you are tempted to do wrong, say "No" and mean "No."

Some one tells of seeing a mother put her little boy on a street car one day, with a note in his pocket to give to his grandma. When she left him she said, "Now don't take the note out of your pocket till you get to grandma's."

There was a smart young man sitting in the car beside the little boy. He said to him: "Please let me see that note." The

little boy didn't say anything. "If you don't let me see it I will make this car run away." The little boy looked at him, but he held to the note. Then the man said: "I will give you one of these nice peaches if you will let me see it." At last he said: "I will give you this whole bag of peaches if you will let me have one little peek." Just then there was a seat vacant on the other side of the car, and the boy climbed down and went away from the man who was trying to make him disobey his mother. There was another man on the other side who had heard it all. He put his hand on the little boy's shoulder and said: "Your mother ought to be very proud of a boy who can resist temptation."

Another fine thing about Joseph was that he always made the best of everything. He was shut up in prison for years, the best years of his life, and all because he had tried to do the right thing. But while he was in prison he set out to make other people happy and to do as much good as he could.

Some of the very finest stories in our language were written by a man who called himself "O. Henry." When he was a young man he was sent to prison. Many men would have become sour and selfish and wicked in prison. But he made the best of it and there he started to write those stories that made him famous.

The best thing of all about Joseph was his forgiving spirit. His brothers had done him a great wrong. But when a chance came to be good to them, he forgave them for all that they had done. That was the finest and the greatest thing that Joseph ever did. He learned to forgive. If you want God to forgive you, you must learn to forgive others.

XXXVIII

Happiness

"And Jesus opened his mouth and taught them, saying, Blessed."—MATTHEW v. 2.

THERE are some parts of the Bible that every child who goes to Sunday school knows. One of these is the Beatitudes. We can say these verses by heart, but there are some of us who do not know much about what they mean, and the Bible can never do us much good till we understand it. I am going to try to tell you in the next few Sundays, as best I can, what these verses mean.

Each one of the Beatitudes begins with the word "blessed." "Blessed" means happy. When you kneel down at night and pray your little prayer, "God bless daddy, and mother, and brothers, and sisters, and me," you mean that you want God to make you all very happy.

Some mothers one day took their little children to Jesus, and asked Him to bless them. There is one thing that every good mother wants more than anything else in the world for her children. She wants them to be happy. She works and prays and plans that they may be happy, and it always

makes her very sad to know that they are unhappy.

Every day we live we ask God to bless us. Now, why do we want God to bless us?

First we ask Him to bless us because without His blessing we can never be happy or successful. Once there was a young soldier in the army of the Duke of Wellington. He was a poor boy who had enlisted to fight for his country. He had become an officer, but he did not know that there was any one in the army who cared particularly for him. One day the great duke was walking about the camp. When he saw the young officer he went to him, put his hand on his shoulder and said "I knew your father and loved him, and I am watching you and expect great things of you." When he had gone the young man was very happy. He knew now that the Duke of Wellington was his friend and his future was safe. This is one reason why we pray for God's blessing. We want His care and protection wherever we go.

Then we all pray for God's blessing because it is the only happiness that is really worth having. I saw once a ring that a man had purchased. He had bought it for pure gold, but it was only plated. After a little the gold on the outside wore off and he found that the ring was not worth anything.

It was brass. There is plenty of happiness in the world like that ring. It looks like the real thing, but the trouble is that it does not last long. It wears off and leaves us as unhappy as we were before. The only real happiness is that which comes from Jesus, the happiness that he told about in these Beatitudes.

Once long, long ago there was a man who was very unhappy. He went everywhere trying to get rid of his troubles, but they would not leave him. At last a fairy came to him and put a golden key in his hand, and told him that every door that he unlocked with that key would bring him happiness. It was a wonderful key. There was no door that it would not open, and whenever the man turned the key and opened a door, there he found happiness. So his troubles all left him and he became bright and cheerful.

In the Beatitudes Jesus gives us a wonderful key, a key of gold, and he shows us eight doors that we may open with it. Before long I will tell you about the first door.

XXXIX

The Poor in Spirit

"Blessed are the poor in spirit; for theirs is the kingdom of heaven."—MATTHEW v. 3.

IF you see a child dressed in ragged clothes you say that he is poor in clothes. If he doesn't know how to read we say, "Poor child, he is poor in education." Now what do you suppose Jesus means by being "poor in spirit"?

First he meant gentleness. When a boy gets angry and loses his temper and does things that he ought not to do, people say, "See how much spirit he has." But he would be a great deal better off if he did not have so much spirit. It is far better when something goes wrong to be poor in spirit, to be gentle. Every boy ought always to try to be a gentleman, and every girl ought never to forget to be a gentlewoman. A gentleman or a gentlewoman is one who is always gentle no matter what happens.

Then, if you are to be poor in spirit, you must learn to repay an injury by a kindness. When someone does wrong to you what do you do? I know what some of you do. You

say, "I'll get even." Then you try to think of some way in which you can hurt him worse than he hurt you. But there is a way that is better than that to pay him back. Do him a kindness.

Once there was a man who was very harsh and cruel to one of his neighbors. Because he could not pay his rent he turned him and his family out in the snow on a cold day. The poor man's wife took cold and died from the exposure.

Some time after this the cruel landlord was very sick. He had been taken with a contagious disease. The neighbors ran away and left him for fear they would take the disease. He would have died had it not been for the poor man, whom he had turned out in the cold that winter night. When he heard that his old enemy was sick, he said to himself, "Now is my chance to get even." He went to the house where the sick man was and took care of him till he was well. He repaid the injury he had suffered by being forgiving and kind.

King Saul tried to kill David. He hated him and made life very unhappy for him. At last there came a day when David might have killed Saul. I hope you have all read the story in the Old Testament. All of David's men wanted him to get even, and kill Saul, but instead of that he forgave him.

Jesus said, "If thine enemy hunger feed him; if he thirst give him drink." That is what Jesus meant by being poor in spirit.

Last, to be poor in spirit means to feel how much we need God. There are some people at Christmas time whom it is very hard to give presents to. They have everything. There are some people like that about God. They never kneel down and pray because they think that they have everything, and do not need to ask God for anything. I am sorry for people like that. It is those who are poor in spirit, who know how very much they need God, whom He really blesses. And being poor in spirit is returning good for evil. I have never known people in my life who were so happy as those who could return good for evil. God always gives the finest and the best things in the world to those who are poor in spirit.

XL

The Mourners

"Blessed are they that mourn for they shall be comforted."—MATTHEW v. 4.

WHEN we see people dressed in black and looking sad and sorrowful, it makes us very sorry. We know that they are mourning for some one who has been taken away from them. In the second beatitude Jesus said, "Blessed," that is, "happy," are they that mourn. It always seems to us that there cannot be very much happiness in mourning, and if it had not been Jesus who spoke those words we would think that there must be some mistake. But Jesus, who knows so much more than we know, said it, and we know that it must be true.

How does mourning bring happiness? Let me tell if I can, and see if we can understand just what this beatitude means.

All boys and girls like candy and cake, but if you had nothing to eat but candy and cake, you would soon become very sick of it. We all like to have clear days, when the sun shines all the time and we can play. Maybe sometimes we have thought when the rain

came down and spoiled our fun, what a fine thing it would be to live in a place where it never rains. Suppose you could go to-day to a land where it never rains, what would you find there? You would find a desert. Nothing grows in the desert. It is sand, sand everywhere and no one can live in the desert. We must have the rain, as well as the sunshine, so that plants, and animals, and boys and girls can live. So we see it would not do to have all sunshine. Therefore, God gives us rain along with the rest.

In the same way, God doesn't give us all pleasure. If He did we would become like that desert, worthless and good-for-nothing. He sends us trouble and sorrow sometimes, to make our hearts grow. You know the heart must grow as well as the body and the mind.

Then God sends us trouble. He makes us mourn, so that we can think of Him. There was a mother who had a little boy whom she loved very much. He became sick and died, and the poor, sad mother was heart-broken. A little while after one of her friends met her and said, "I am so sorry. It is so sad." The mother said, "Yes, but I can understand it now. I didn't think before about God at all. All I thought of was myself and having a good time. But God took my little boy up to live with Him. And

then I began to think: 'I want to see him again some time. And if I am ever to see him, I must go up to live with God, too.' And then I began to wonder whether I was ready to go to be with him. Now I am trying to live so that when the time comes there will be a place there for me, too, with him."

There is something else that we ought to mourn over. It is our sins. Long ago there was a very wicked city called Nineveh. It was one of the worst cities that ever was. At last God told one of His prophets to go and tell the people that, unless they repented, He would destroy the whole city. So the prophet told the people what God had said. They were very much afraid and asked the prophet what they should do, so that God might have mercy and save them. This is what he told them, "Go and put on mourning every one of you." They were to mourn for their sins. They did as the prophet told them, and all went into mourning, and God saved Nineveh.

Do you know why the monks and nuns all wear black? It is the mourning color. It is not because some one has died. It is because of their sins. They are mourning for their evil deeds.

There are two kinds of men and women and boys and girls. One kind, when they do something wrong say, "I don't care." They

are not sorry for what they have done. They make God very angry. There are others, who, when they have done evil, are filled with sorrow, and kneel down and ask God to forgive them. This is what we mean by mourning for our sins. It is being sorry and asking God to forgive us, and promising never to do it again.

When our loved ones die, heaven seems very near. As we mourn for them we seem to come so close to the gates that we can almost see inside into the glory of the heavenly city. The first glimpse that many people have of God and heaven is when someone near and dear to them goes to heaven to live with God. With the sorrow there comes to them a great joy and they can say, "Blessed are they that mourn, for they shall be comforted."

XLI

Meekness

"Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth."
—MATTHEW v. 5.

WHO was the meekest man? I am sure you can all answer this question. It was Moses. He is said to have been the meekest man in the Bible. If you would like to know what meekness is there is no better way to find out than by reading the life of Moses.

When Moses was a very young man he had an ugly temper. One day he became angry with another man and killed him. He couldn't control his temper. For this God sent him away for forty years into exile. When he came back there was a great change in him. He could face all sorts of insults and wrongs without an angry word. He had learned to master his temper.

Some one was telling of being in a blacksmith's shop one day talking to the blacksmith, a big, powerful man. All at once another man came into the shop and began to abuse the blacksmith. He called him names, and insulted him, and dared him to fight. The blacksmith said not a word. Some one

said, "Why doesn't he fight; is he afraid?" Then another man spoke, "No, he is not afraid. He is winning a harder battle now than if he were to fight that man. The blacksmith has a bad temper. He used to be a great fighter. He could kill that man, who is insulting him, if he tried. But he is trying to overcome his temper instead." The greatest hero or heroine, boys and girls, is the one who fights and conquers self. That is what Solomon meant when he said: "Better is he that ruleth his spirit than he that taketh a city."

Alexander the Great, history tells us, conquered with his army all the cities of the world, and then wept because there were no more worlds to conquer, and then he died a drunkard because he couldn't conquer his appetite for drink. There are boys and girls, and men and women, like this king. They are looking out for something to conquer, when they ought to be looking in. There is plenty of evil inside everyone of us to overcome.

This is what Jesus meant when He said, "Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth." The boy who is able to win the fight against his own temper, and his own bad habits, will not have much trouble in any other struggle that comes in life.

Then Moses was always willing to go

where God wanted him to go and to be what God wanted him to be.

The mothers over in northern Italy sometimes tell their children about the little lame boy who lived long ago in the Alps. This boy was always thinking about how worthless he was because he was lame, and could not do things that other boys did. His mother comforted him by telling him that God had work for lame boys, and if he watched, some day he would have a chance to be a hero. So he forgot about his lameness in hoping that he would have an opportunity to do something great. Italy was at that time at war with France and a great pile of wood had been placed on a hill-top above the village. When the news came that the French were coming this pile was to be lighted. This would warn the people so that they could escape.

One day there was a holiday. Everybody was in the village making merry and having a good time, all but the little lame boy. He couldn't run and play like the rest, so he stayed at home. As he sat there lonely and sad, all at once he thought he saw a flash of steel. He looked again and, sure enough, the French soldiers were coming up the valley. Quickly he ran into the house and brought fire and started the beacon in time for the people to get away. But he did not

escape. He was killed at the first fire. But he had saved the village, this little lame boy, who thought that he could not do anything.

When God sends some trouble to us we must not become impatient and angry about it. This little boy would never have saved that village if he had not been lame, and in the same way we will find that our troubles always turn out to be our blessings.

Trouble is the training very often out of which God makes His heroes and heroines. I am very sure that if there were not so much sorrow and trouble in the world there would not be so many wonderful deeds of bravery and self-sacrifice. So let us thank God for everything that He sends us.

"Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth."

XLII

Seeking the Best Things

"Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled."
—MATTHEW v. 6.

DID you ever know a little boy who was not collecting something? We saw one not long ago picking up something on the ground. He was gathering acorns. He had several boxes full. We asked him what he was going to do with them. He said, "I don't know. I am just getting them."

Some boys collect marbles. They have fine collections of agates and shooters, and dinks.

There are others that love to gather postage stamps. They are always looking for some new kind of stamp. They have stamps of England, with the king's head on them; and pretty, queer stamps from China and Japan, and from dozens of other countries all over the world.

Almost every boy has a collection of some kind. Some one said one day, "What funny people boys are. They are always looking for something." Well, boys are not very different from grown-up men. Everybody is

seeking for something in the world. There are some people who spend all their lives seeking for money. They want a great deal, and when they get that they will want more. If some one were to ask them what they wanted with it, they would say, "I don't know. I am just getting it," like the little boy who was gathering acorns. Gathering money never satisfies anyone. Have you ever taken a drink of ocean water? Perhaps when you first went bathing at Ocean View or Virginia Beach you swallowed a little of the water. You know it isn't like the water we drink at home. Instead of satisfying our thirst, it makes us more thirsty. And the more we drink of it the thirstier we get. That is the way with the man who lives to make money. The more of it he gets the more he wants. He is never satisfied, and often the people who have the most are the most unhappy and discontented. So money doesn't bring happiness.

Then there are others who are always seeking pleasure. A little pleasure is a fine thing. But when we have too much we become very weary of it. Some day you are off on a picnic. You go to the seashore or the country, and you have a good time all day. When it is all over you think how good it would be if you had a picnic like that every day. But if you were to have one

every day you would soon become very tired of it, and want to go back to school and to work again. All pleasure never makes anyone happy.

What is there that will bring us real happiness? In this verse Jesus tells us. It is righteousness. This means doing good.

Once there was a king who had a son whom he loved very much. But the young prince had poor health. The king was very much worried. He knew that if anything were to happen to his son there would be no one to be king after he died. He had the best doctors of the realm to come and see him, and they did their best, but there was not one of them who was able to help him, and he grew worse and worse. At last the king thought that he would surely lose him. One day there came to the court a wise old man. He said to the king, "I can cure your son, but he must do exactly as I tell him." The king was very glad and said, "If you will cure him, I will give you anything that you ask." The old man said, "I do not care for any reward. I only want the prince to get well."

The old man took a piece of paper and wrote something on it with an invisible ink. He gave it to the prince and told him after he had gone to hold the paper up to the fireplace. The prince did as the wise man

told him. He held the paper before the fire and when the print became warm, the writing came out so that he could read it. This was what was written there, "Do something for some one else every day you live." The prince did as the wise man advised. He began to think about other people instead of about himself, and it was not long before he was well and happy.

Do you know that when you are getting things for yourself and doing things for yourself, it is not very long before you become very tired of it. But begin to think about others, and do something for some one else every day that you live, and it will not be long before you, too, will be happy. "Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be filled."

XLIII

Be Merciful

"Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy."
—MATTHEW v. 7.

LONG ago there was a slave named Androclus. This slave had a cruel master, and one day he ran away and hid in a cave. While he was in the cave a lion came toward him. Androclus was about to run away when he saw that the lion was in great distress. He was limping and holding up one of his paws. Androclus took hold of the paw and saw that there was a thorn in it, and the lion could not get it out. He cut out the thorn and put some ointment on the sore paw. After this the lion ran away to the desert and the slave forgot about him.

Years after this Androclus was a slave in Rome. He had another cruel master. In those days wicked men sent their poor slaves to fight with the lions in the arena, to furnish sport for the people. Androclus had been condemned by his master to fight a great lion. He was sure he would be killed no matter how hard he fought, so he said good-bye to his friends and resolved to die as bravely as he could.

They put him in the arena, a door was opened and out sprang a great African lion. He came with great leaps toward Androclus. All at once he stopped and began to lick the slave's hands and show his friendliness and love. Instead of hurting him the lion played with him like a friendly dog. It was the same lion out of whose paw he had pulled the thorn.

The emperor was there watching the sports that day. He had never seen anything like that before. He sent for Androclus, and when he heard the story of the thorn and the kindness of the slave which the lion had never forgotten, he gave orders to set both the slave and the lion free.

Androclus was kind and merciful to the lion and the lion was merciful and kind to him. Those who are kind to others will have kindness shown to them.

One way to be merciful is to be kind to the dumb animals. Boys are cruel oftentimes because they are thoughtless. They do not know how much it hurts or they would not do it. And they do not think how useful are the little animals and insects that they hurt and kill.

One day I saw some little boys killing a toad. There is no other animal that is so valuable to a farmer as the little ugly hop-

toad. It kills thousands and thousands of insects that destroy the plants.

It is said that the great Duke of Wellington once found a very little friend of his crying in the garden. He stopped and asked him what was the matter. The little boy said that they were going to move the next day and there would be no one to take care of his pet toad. The Duke said, "Don't cry any more. I will look after him myself." So not long after the little boy received a letter, saying: "The Duke of Wellington is pleased to inform his friend William Harris that his toad is alive and well."

But it is not enough to be merciful to the animals. We ought to be thoughtful and kind to everyone and everything.

Mr. Learmount tells of a drover who was coming home one night, when he heard a little cry. It was very late. He had six miles to go, and he was in a hurry. He stopped and listened. There was a large sum of money in his pocket, and he thought it might be a trick to rob him. But the cries became louder, and he turned his horse and followed in the direction from which they came. He found a little girl lying on the ground, who moaned and sobbed as he took her in his arms. He carried her home, and then he discovered that it was his own little girl. Before he went away he had promised

to bring her a doll, and she had started out to meet him and had become lost. He can never thank God enough that he was led to be merciful that night.

We can be merciful with our words as well as our deeds. When you hear something unkind and hateful about someone else, what do you do? Oh, I know what some of you do. You hurry and tell someone else, and she tells someone, and so it goes on until almost everybody knows about it. And perhaps it was not true in the first place. The best thing, the merciful thing to do, when you hear some evil thing about some one you know, is to keep it to yourself and never tell any one.

We have all done and said many things that we hope God will forgive and forget. If we expect Him to forgive us, we must show that we are worthy of forgiveness by showing mercy to others.

"Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy."

XLIV

Clean Thoughts

"Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God."
—MATTHEW v. 8.

THERE are several things that every well-bred child is taught. One is to have hands and face clean. Another is to keep clothes tidy, and another is to take good care of books. But there is something that is far more important than any of these things. We must also keep our hearts clean. When Jesus spoke of keeping the heart pure, He meant the thoughts. There is nothing that is so important for a boy or girl as to keep the thoughts clean.

What do we mean by an impure heart? We mean boys and girls who always have something impure and evil in their thoughts.

When we have dirty faces we can wash them with soap and water and they will be clean. When our clothes are soiled we can send them to the laundry or the cleaner. When our books are torn and mussed we can buy new ones. But when the thoughts become soiled it is not so easy to make them pure again. A few miles outside of Philadelphia there is a very large field that is cov-

ered with little brick houses. They are so small that they look almost like doll houses. That field is a part of the filtration plant of the city. Every drop of water that flows into Philadelphia passes through there and is purified. It is not allowed to come into the city till it is clean and pure.

In our text Jesus said that only those can see God who have clean thoughts. None can enter heaven unless they have pure hearts. So it is very important that we should all have our thoughts clean.

Let me tell you several ways in which you can keep your thoughts clean.

Be very careful about the books that you read. Did you ever try to pick up a piece of coal without soiling your fingers? You couldn't do it. Wherever you touched that coal there was a black mark on your hand. You can't read a bad book without having a black, unclean mark left on your thoughts. It is very easy to wash off the stain of the coal, but it is very hard to get the mark of the bad book off. Sometimes it stays there forever.

Then be careful about what you see. I imagine that most all of you go to moving picture shows. Some of these pictures are very good. But there are more that are very bad. They leave a great big stain on the thoughts.

If one of you girls had a beautiful new white dress, you would be very careful where you walked. You would not want to fall down in a mud-puddle, and soil that new dress. God has given you clean, pure minds. Some of the pictures that people go to see are like a mud-puddle. They soil every one who looks at them.

Then, third, watch your companions. There are some diseases that are contagious. If one boy has a contagious disease and another boy goes to play with him he will catch it too. There is nothing more contagious than unclean thoughts. One boy who has a dirty mind will give it to every other boy he plays with. So when you find boys and girls whose thoughts are unclean, stay away from them, as though they had the small-pox.

We all have in our thoughts many things that ought not to be there. There is nothing that is so hard to cleanse as the thoughts. Jesus is the only one who can make the impure mind clean. Long ago King David prayed a little prayer that we ought all to pray every day, "Create within me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me."

"Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God."

XLV

Peacemakers

"Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called the children of God."—MATTHEW v. 9.

Every boy admires a soldier. This week when the soldiers from the fort and the sailors from the battleships parade through the streets, I know that every boy in town will be there to hear the bands play and to see the fine, straight lines of men marching. Most boys think what a fine thing it would be when they grow up to be soldiers.

And the girls admire the soldiers, too. While in Lexington watching the dress parade of the V. M. I. boys, some one said to me, "Do you know, all the girls just love brass buttons and a pretty uniform." And we ought all to admire the soldiers. Some of the finest men of the nation have gone into the army and the navy. They are ready at any time to give their lives to save their country.

But there is something that is finer than making war. Jesus tells us here what it is. It is making peace. The best life is not that of the war-maker, but that of the peacemaker.

We all dislike a troublemaker. There is a little girl whom the other children call "the Troublemaker." No matter how peaceably they are playing together, as soon as she appears there is always trouble. She sets one child against another, and before long there is a quarrel, and then the fun is over. No one likes to see her come around. She is a "troublemaker."

But every one loves a peacemaker. Sometimes at sea when the ocean is rough and the little boats are in danger of being overturned, they pour oil on the water. This oil helps to make the sea smooth and calm.

A peacemaker is one who helps to make life calm and smooth for other people. There were two little boys who were about to have a fight. There were some bigger boys there who were urging them on. When the little fellows were about ready to pitch into each other, there came along another boy. When he saw what was going on, he took each of them by the arm and led them off and talked to them a moment, and before long they were smiling, and went off to play together as if nothing had happened. He was a peacemaker. I found out afterward that he was one of the most popular boys in school. Wherever he goes he makes things smooth and peaceable.

President Wilson is a peacemaker. When

this country and Mexico were about ready to have a fight, and other nations, like a lot of naughty, big boys, were urging them on, the President said, "Let's talk this over," and after they had had a talk there was no war.

Jesus says that peacemakers shall be called the children of God. Whom does your father love best of all the children in the world? He loves you, doesn't he, because you are his children. Whom does God love best of all the people in the world. He loves His children. And who are God's children? They are the peacemakers. So if you want God to love you, begin to-day to be a peacemaker.

XLVI

Persecuted for Doing Good

"Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness' sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven."
—MATTHEW v. 10.

WHEN we do wrong we always have to suffer for it. Perhaps our fathers and mothers and teachers do not know about it, and they do not punish. But God always knows and He never forgets. For every wrong deed there will some day be a punishment.

But it is not the bad people alone who have to suffer. Sometimes the good suffer because they are good. We call that kind of suffering persecution. Why did the people crucify Jesus long ago? Was it because He had done wrong? No, it was because He was good. They hated holiness, and there are people like them to-lay, who hate goodness and do all that they can to make good people suffer.

One of our missionaries tells of a little Chinese boy, fifteen years ago, when the Boxers were persecuting the poor Christians of China. The Chinese governor heard that this boy was a Christian. He had been at the mission school and had heard about

Jesus and had learned to love Him. They sent for the boy and told him he must give up his Bible, and sacrifice to the heathen god. The boy said he was a follower of Jesus, and could not sacrifice to heathen gods. He was told that if he did not do as he was ordered he would be killed. The boy answered, "You can kill me, if you will, but I will never deny Jesus." And they killed him.

Jesus meant boys like that when He said, "Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness' sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven."

In our country boys and girls are not killed for being Christians. Almost everyone honors you here if it is known you are a follower of Jesus. But there are ways in which even now we must suffer persecution.

Sometimes when boys go away to school for the first time, and night comes and they kneel down by their beds to say their prayers, the others make fun of them. It is harder to stand ridicule than it is a blow, and there are some young Christians who give up their religion rather than hear the ridicule of others. I haven't much use for a religion like that, have you? If it is not strong enough to have a little fun made of it, it isn't worth much.

The New York papers told a story last

summer of a boy in a northern city. He was a good boy. He would not do many things that the other boys did, things that were wrong. He went to church and Sunday school, and the Christian Endeavor Society, and the boys in his class in the high school made fun of him and his religion. There are many railroads running through the city where he lived. One day he was near one of the railroads when he saw a little child playing on the track. A train was coming and she would be killed. He did not hesitate a moment, but jumped in front of the locomotive. He was killed, but the little girl was saved. The boys, as the paper said, had persecuted him because he was good, but when it came to the real test he was the bravest one of all.

Remember this, if you are doing right, you need never fear what any one may say or do. When a jeweler is not sure that a ring is gold he tests it to see if it is pure. So sometimes God lets us be persecuted to see if we are really pure gold.

XLVII

God's Day

"Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy."
EXODUS xx. 8.

VERY often we hear children say, "I forgot." That is one reason many of us do wrong. We do not mean to. We just forget. But we ought not to forget. There are some things that God tells us we must remember. One of these is the Sabbath Day. He says, "Remember the Sabbath Day to keep it holy." There is one day of the week we are to keep holy. On that day we are not to think about ourselves and our own work, but about God and others.

When God said, "Remember," there were three things about the Sabbath that He does not want us to forget.

First, it is the one day of the week that belongs to Him. If you had a friend and he had seven pennies, and he were to give you six of them and were only to keep one for himself, you would think him a very generous sort of a friend. Well, suppose you were to spend your six pennies, and then go and take his one and spend that, too, for your-

self, that would be about the meanest and most selfish thing that you could do, wouldn't it? There isn't a boy or girl here who would do a thing like that to a playmate, I am sure, but there are some of us who are treating God in this way.

God gave us six days for ourselves, and kept only one for Himself, and there are plenty of boys and girls, and men and women, who are using their six days and then taking God's day, too, for themselves. People who do not remember the Sabbath Day to keep it holy are very selfish with the good God who has been so generous and kind to us.

Then God wants us to remember the Sabbath because it is the day on which He expects us to serve Him.

A boy said to me once, "I don't like Sunday. It is so long and there is nothing to do but go to Sunday school and church. I am always glad when it is over."

The reason Sunday seems so long and we are discontented all the day, is because we are thinking about what we cannot do on that day. There are, of course, many things that we cannot do on Sunday that we do on other days, but there are, too, many things that we can do, and if we will think about them and then go and do them, the day will not seem long.

Our fathers and mothers worry about us

every day that we live, for we give them much to be troubled about. It would be a fine thing if, on Sundays, we could all be so good that they would not need to think about us at all. That would mean that mother would have a day of rest.

And there is another thing we can do. There is a good man who works very hard every day. He is so busy that he has little time during the week to think of anything but his big business. But when Sunday comes he forgets his business and spends the whole day thinking about other things. If there is some one who is sick and suffering, or in need or trouble, he tries, on that day, to visit him and help him. We can do all that. We can all begin now and try on Sundays to be of some help and service to someone besides ourselves. That is what Jesus did. It is the way to make Sunday the very best day of the whole week.

Third, God wants us to remember the Sabbath Day because He remembers it, and He blesses those who keep it holy.

A little over a year ago one of the big railroads of this country built the biggest and most powerful engine in the world. It has twenty-four drive wheels. When it was finished the company wanted a name for it. Whom do you think they named it after? After the president of the road, or one of

the big directors? No. They called it the "Mat H. Shay," after one of the modest engineers of the line. Let me tell you why they did it. A long time ago Mr. Shay, after being a fireman for a number of years, became engineer on one of the fast passenger trains. It was a fine position and he received a big salary. About thirty-five years ago he was converted and decided that he ought not to work on Sundays. So he quietly went to the superintendent and told him that he had joined the church and couldn't go out any more on Sunday runs. He thought that he would rather work in the foundry for a dollar a day than break the Sabbath.

The superintendent did not discharge him, but took him off the fine passenger engine and put him on a dirty freight engine with a much smaller salary. Mr. Shay did not complain. He worked on the freight engine for years and then they gave him a passenger engine that did not run on Sundays.

Last year when the railroad wanted to name their big engine after the finest man in the employment of the company, they picked out the man who was willing to give up his fine position rather than break the Sabbath.

God made the Sabbath to be a holy-day. It is quite the fashion nowadays to change it into a holiday. There is only a difference

of one small letter between the words "holy-day" and "holiday." But in their meaning there is all the difference between obeying God and dishonoring Him.

God said, "Them that honor Me I will honor." If we hope to have God honor and bless us, we must begin by honoring Him and His day.

There are many lessons that you will all need to learn and to remember, but there are few things in life that will bring you more joy all your days than simple obedience to these words, "Remember the Sabbath Day to keep it holy."

XLVIII

The Red, White and Blue

"Honor to whom honor is due."—ROMANS xiii. 7.

EVERYWHERE we go these days we see the American flag. We love it because it stands for our country. There are three colors in the flag, red, white and blue, and I am going to try to tell you what those colors mean, so that you will better know what the flag stands for.

First there is the red. Red stands for courage. It is bravery. A brave man is one who is willing to sacrifice himself for others. One of the men in the navy who was on the same ship with Admiral Dewey at Manila, was telling of his bravery during the battle. While the fight was going on, Dewey stood on the bridge of the Olympia, with the shot and shell flying about him, fanning himself with a palm-leaf fan. He was no more afraid than if he had been at an afternoon tea.

Boys sometimes think what a fine thing it would be to join the army, or the navy, and show their courage, but we can all be brave, even if we cannot go and fight. Courage is making sacrifices for others. There

was a little boy not long ago who had been planning for a birthday party. He had invited his little friends and made all his arrangements to have a fine time. A day or two before they were to come a woman next door became very ill. He knew that the noise of the children would disturb the sick lady, so he gave up his party without a word. He was a brave little fellow, to be willing to sacrifice his pleasure for the comfort of some one else. Red stands for courage. Let us all try to be brave.

The second color is white. White stands for purity. The whitest thing that we know is the snow. It is white because it is pure. The least speck of dirt will soil the purity of the snow.

Every morning I see little girls going by to school. Their dresses are so clean and white in the morning, but many of them are soiled before night. We cannot always keep our clothes from being soiled, but there is one thing we can all do. We can keep our hearts clean.

David said, "O Lord, create within me a clean heart." We ought to pray that prayer every day that we live. God can help us to keep our hearts pure and clean. The stars on the flag are all white. You know now what the white stands for. It is for purity.

If you want to be a good American and be loyal to your flag you must be pure.

The third color in the flag is blue. Blue stands for loyalty. Sometimes we hear it said of a person, "He is as true as steel." That is loyalty.

During our Revolutionary War, Lord Tarleton, the British commander, was very anxious to capture a certain American officer, who had done many brave deeds. They could not catch him. Finally they found his little boy and brought him in before General Tarleton. He asked him if he know where his father was. The boy said, "Yes, I know, but I cannot tell you." He was told that he must tell or he would be killed. The little boy said, "You can kill me if you want to, but you can't make me tell." And they killed him. That boy was true as steel; he was loyal to his father. I wouldn't give much for a boy who wouldn't be true to his mother and sisters, or his friends.

We are reading wonderful stories of brave men and women these days. One of the bravest men who lived during the last century was General Gordon, of the British army. He was always true as steel to the things that he believed were right. Whenever he found a poor boy, who had no home, he cared for him and sent him somewhere where he could grow to be a useful man. He

had a little map that he carried everywhere with him. There were many pins sticking in it. Someone asked him why he stuck those pins in the map. He said, "They are my boys." He never forgot his boys. And he never forgot God.

Every morning, soon after dawn, when the orders for the day had been issued, there was a little time of quiet. Outside the door of General Gordon's tent there hung a handkerchief. While that handkerchief was there everyone knew that the General was not to be disturbed. He was at prayer. That is the sort of boys and girls the nation needs, those who are true to Jesus Christ.

When you see the flags waving stop and think what those colors stand for. The red is for courage, the right kind of courage. The white is for purity of thought and word and deed. And the blue is for loyalty always to God and to country.

XLIX

Christmas Gifts

"God so loved that He gave."—JOHN iii. 16.

GOD loved the world so much that He gave Jesus to save the world. So when Christmas comes and we celebrate the birth of Jesus, that which we ought to think about most is the love of God to us, and our love to others.

Most of us hang up our stockings the night before Christmas. There was once a little girl who woke up one Christmas morning and found her stocking filled with good things. She had great fun taking them out and looking at them one by one. At last, when she had seen everything her mother said: "Mary, there is one thing in that stocking yet, the best gift of all."

So Mary took the stocking and put her hand down to the end of it, but there was nothing there. She turned it inside out, but it was empty. So she said to her mother, "I can't find anything more." Her mother said: "Didn't you know that that stocking was full of love?" That was the best gift of all. This is what makes Christmas bright

and happy. It is the love that comes with everything.

Not only must we have love with all our gifts if they are truly Christmas gifts, but we must also have common sense with them.

Did you ever hear the little fairy story of the two little girls? The little one was crying and the older girl was trying to comfort her. She offered her her dolls, and her little bed, and her blocks, but the little one kept on crying all the harder. Everything that was given her she would put into her mouth.

About that time a fairy came along. When she heard the baby crying she stopped and asked what was the matter. The sister said, "I have offered her everything that I have, but she will not stop. She just cries and cries." "Maybe," said the fairy, "she is hungry." So she took a piece of bread from her pocket and gave it to the baby, and she stopped crying, and before long was laughing and crowing.

"Remember," said the fairy, as she went away, "that blocks and dolls will never make a baby happy if she is hungry."

When we try to make others happy with our gifts let us remember to give them what they need and what will make them happy.

And we ought not to forget at Christmas

that we must give a gift to Jesus. It is His birthday, and we ought not to forget Him. The Bible tells us that there were three wise men who came to worship the infant Jesus. Henry van Dyke tells the story of a fourth wise man who started out with the rest to bring his jewels to Jesus, but while they were on the way to Bethlehem they found a wounded man along the wayside. He stopped to take care of him, and when he started on again it was too late to find Jesus. He went back to his home and lived there for thirty-three years, helping the sick and the poor and the needy. When he was quite an old man he heard that the enemies of Jesus were plotting to kill Him. So he set out for Jerusalem to rescue Him if he could. He arrived on the very day that Jesus was crucified. In the crowd he saw a wicked man beating a poor slave girl. He had one jewel left and he took it and bought the slave girl from her master.

While Jesus was being crucified a great earthquake shook the city. A tile fell from a roof and struck the old man on the head and felled him to the earth. As he lay dying the slave girl who was sitting beside him, heard him say: "Not so, Lord, when saw I thee hungry, or sick, or in prison"? And then there came a voice from heaven: "Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least

of these my brethren, ye have done it unto Me."

The fourth wise man had loved others, and in loving them he had loved and helped Jesus.

A lady who spent several years in a great city in Europe says that she was walking through the street the afternoon before Christmas, when she spied three little girls looking into a beautiful shop-window. The window had been arranged to represent the scene in Bethlehem when Jesus was born. There was the Holy Family, with Mary and Joseph, and the Child Jesus. The sheep and the oxen were standing around. Before the infant Jesus the wise men were kneeling, while the shepherds were standing in the background, and above them the angels were hovering. It was a lovely picture, and two of the little girls were telling the other about it. As the lady came near she saw that the third little girl was blind, and the others were trying to tell her of what they saw. As they told her she clasped her hands together and said, "Isn't it beautiful?"

Remember, boys and girls, there are many children who have never heard of Jesus and the blessed message of Christmas. There could be no finer gift for Jesus to-day than to help make it possible for them to hear about Him.

L

The Coming of Jesus

"I will come again."—JOHN xiv. 3.

BOYS and girls are saying to-day, "Three more days and then Christmas." The children and most of the grown-up people, too, have been looking forward to next Saturday. We all love Christmas because of the surprises that come with the day. And while we are thinking about these things we must not forget the greatest surprise and the greatest gift of all, the gift of Jesus to the world.

Jesus came to the earth as a little child and lived here for thirty-three years and went away. Before He went He said that He would come back, and be here always. Now how does Jesus come? The book of Revelation says that He is walking around among the churches seeing what people are doing. But some one says to me, "How can Jesus be here on the earth? I have looked and looked and I have never seen Him anywhere." But that is only because we have not looked in the right place.

There was once a king who wanted very

much to know what his people were thinking and talking about when he was not around. But how was he to find out? If they saw him coming they would be on their good behavior, and he would never know. So this is what he did. He disguised himself. He put on the old clothes of a workman, and let his beard grow, and wore an old hat, and a pair of worn-out shoes. Then he could go through the streets and hear what the people said, and they would not know that the king was listening. Some of the people, as he went around, were very kind to him, and there were others who were rude and mean.

Some time passed and one day all the people were invited to come to the palace and see the king. They came, and the palace door opened, and he came out. He was not dressed in his royal robes, but in the poor old clothes that he had worn when he went among the people. Then they knew it was the king who had been going about among them, and those who had been kind to him were very glad, and those who had been rude and unkind were ashamed and afraid.

That is what Jesus said that He would do. And that is what He is doing now. He is walking about among us hearing what we say and seeing what we do.

There is a lovely little Christmas story

which I wish you would all try to remember.

Once there was a poor shoemaker named Martin. He lived in a great city far away across the sea. Martin was a good man and loved Jesus, and had often thought how much he would like to have Him come into his house. The night before Christmas Martin dreamed that he heard a voice say, "Martin, look to-morrow on the streets, for I am coming."

When morning came he got up and said his prayers, and went into his little shop to begin work. Then he thought of the voice and began to look out on the streets for the coming of Jesus. All that he could see was a poor man shoveling snow, who was so feeble and cold that he could hardly move. Martin said to himself, "While I am waiting for the Lord to come, I'll make the old man a cup of warm tea."

So he did, and after the old laborer had refreshed himself Martin set to work to look for the Lord again.

Then he saw a poor woman trying to keep a little child warm with an old ragged shawl. He called them in and gave them something to eat and made them warm by his fire.

When they had gone, he worked a little while, till he thought it was about time for the Lord to come, so he went out into the street again to look.

Nearby, there was an old apple woman, and there was a bad boy who was trying to steal her apples, and the old woman was crying and struggling with the boy.

Martin rushed out and caught the boy and talked to him till he begged the old woman's forgiveness.

By and by night came. It was time for him to go to bed. "Christmas is past and the Lord hasn't come," Martin thought to himself. He sat down to read his Bible. While he was reading he fell asleep, for he was very tired. As he slept he dreamed that he heard the voice again, "Martin, did you not know me when I came?" And Martin said, "Who?" And the voice said, "I." Then he saw the face of the old man shoveling snow, and the voice said, "This is I." Then came the poor woman and the little child, and the voice said, "This is I," and last came the old apple woman and the boy, and the voice said, "This is I."

Martin woke up and wondered what it all meant. Then his eyes fell on the page he had been reading, and this is what he saw, "I was hungry and ye gave me meat; I was thirsty and ye gave me drink; I was a stranger and ye took me in; inasmuch as ye did it to these, ye did it to me."

This is the way that Jesus comes. Let us, like Martin, be on the lookout for Him.

LI

Forget-me-nots

"Giving thanks always for all things unto God and the Father."—EPHESIANS v. 20.

THIS is the last Sunday of the year, when we ought to think seriously about the twelve months that are past. We cannot think of them without being thankful to God for all that He has done for us. How many good things we have had and how many good times have been ours in the past year. We couldn't begin to count them if we wanted to, and we have God to thank for them all.

There was a teacher once who asked her class who gave them the bread that they had for their dinner. They all said, "My mother." "And who gave it to your mother?" "The baker." "And who gave it to the baker?" "The miller." "And who gave it to the miller?" "The farmer." "And who gave it to the farmer?" "The ground." "And who gave it to the ground?" "God."

Yes, God gave us the food that we eat and everything else that we have to make us happy. Not very long ago I saw a poor woman who was not able to move a single muscle of her body. She lies all the day

stretched out on a bed and has to be fed like a little child. And she has been lying that way for twelve years. When we see some one like that, and then think how strong and active and healthy we are, we ought to be very thankful to God, for our health comes from Him.

When you were sick last year, who made you well? You say, "The doctor came and gave me some medicine and before long I was well again." But where did the doctor get the medicine? It came from the drug store. And where did it come from before that? It came from a plant that grows in the ground. And who made it grow? God. God gave us our bread, and our health, and everything that we have. And we sometimes forget to thank Him for them.

The day before Christmas the postman rings your bell and hands you a package some one has sent you for a Christmas gift. Now what do you do? Do you thank him for bringing it and let it go at that? No, indeed! You look inside and see who sent it, and then you thank the person who gave it.

The trouble with many of us is, that we thank the people who bring the gifts and we forget to look inside and see who sent them. That is the reason we do not thank God more.

In the spring, when the flowers are blooming, the mothers of Germany tell their children a little story of one of the flowers that we all know. Long, long ago there was a poor musician who loved a maiden. But she was the daughter of a nobleman and he was only a poor musician, and he was told that he could never marry her till he had won riches and fame. So he went away to a distant land to try to become great so that he could win her. After a few years he had both riches and fame, and came back and claimed his bride. One evening they were walking along the riverside when he saw a bunch of lovely little flowers growing close to the water's edge. He reached over to pluck them for her, and as he did so his foot slipped and he fell into the river. The current was very swift and he was carried away, but before he sank he threw the bunch of flowers he had plucked to the land, crying as he did so, "Forget-me-not." Ever since that day, so the story goes, that little flower, which before was called the "Mouse's Ear," because it looks so much like the ear of a mouse, has been called the "Forget-me-Not."

To everyone who listens that little flower says, "Forget-me-not," and to everyone who thinks to-day of the blessings of the year that is ending, God is saying, "Give thanks for all things unto God and the Father."

LII

The Man Who Didn't Keep His Promise to Himself

"He answered and said, I go, sir, and went not."
—MATTHEW xxi. 30.

HERE Jesus tells us about a man who had two sons. One day he told them to go and work in the garden. One of them said, "All right, father, I will go." Then he went off and forgot all about it, and did something else.

The other boy said, "I won't." But after his father had gone he begun to think that it was a very unkind way to treat a good father, who had done so much for him, so he went.

The first of these two boys made a promise and did not keep it. There are three kinds of broken promises. There are the promises that we make to God. We call these promises vows. One day there was a sick man in a hospital. He was very much frightened, for he did not know whether he was going to get well or not. So he promised God that if He would make him

well that he would live a good life, and go to church every Sunday. God answered his prayer. He became entirely well, and went home from the hospital, and then he forgot all about the vow that he had made to God. It is a very wicked and dangerous thing to make a promise to God and not keep it.

Second, there is the promise that we make to another person, and do not keep. A man told me once that he had made a promise to his mother long ago that he would never touch any kind of intoxicating liquor, and all his life long he had kept that promise. That kind of a promise is a pledge.

Most of us would not break our vows to God. We are afraid to do that, and we do not often break our pledges to others, but we think that it is all right to break the promises that we make to ourselves.

We call a promise that we make to ourselves a resolution. We hear people say that they are making good resolutions for the New Year. That means that they are promising themselves that they will do better this coming year than they did last year. There are good people who promise themselves a great many fine things on the first of January, and then forget them all before the first of February. They break their promises to themselves, and that is wrong, just as it is wrong to break the vow we make

to God, or the pledge we give to someone else.

Here are one or two good promises to make to ourselves at the beginning of the year.

First, let us resolve that we will be Christians all the year through. If we read the Bible, and study the life of Jesus, and try to do what He would have us do, there will be no trouble about our Christian lives this year. One of the best things we can do is to resolve that we will read the Bible every day that we live. What would you think of a ship captain who started out to sail down this coast without a chart? Before long his ship would be like that one we saw on the bar not long ago, fast on the sand. If we go astray this year it will be because we have not taken the chart along. So let us resolve that we will read it every day.

Another thing, let us resolve that we will do with our might whatever we find to do.

There was once a workman in a shop who was making a long iron bolt. He spent much labor and time over it, making it perfect, and one of the other workmen laughed at him. "What is the use," he said, "of being so particular? You do not get any more for it." But the workman did his best and made the bolt as well as he could. That bolt was used to couple the central span of

a great bridge. Years after the army of his country was crossing that bridge. There was a tremendous strain upon it, and it would have fallen and lives would have been lost if that bolt had not been perfect. It was the carefulness of that workman that saved the army that day.

I knew a boy who went to school and neglected his mathematics. He could have done well, but he did not try. A few years later he had the chance to get a fine position, but when he tried for it, they found that he was deficient in his mathematics. Anything that is worth doing is worth doing well, and it would be a splendid thing if we would all make a promise to ourselves, that we will do our very best this year in everything that is given us to do.

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